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ABSTRACT

This guide provides a comprehensive guidance program evaluation or it can be used to evaluate selected parts of a program. Chapter 1 "What Is Guidance Program Evaluation? by Sharon K. Johnson, introduces evaluation concepts. Chapter 2 "Results-Based Guidance Programs" by C. D. Johnson introduces the elements common to results-based guidance models. Chapter 3 "Guidance Program Evaluation: The Program Audit" by Norman C. Gysbers examines the readiness of a guidance program for results evaluation. Chapter 4 "Assessing Results" by C. D. Johnson provides criteria for determining whether a guidance program is results-based for the purposes of program evaluation. Chapter 5 "Using Evaluation Results" by Edwin A. Whitfield addresses the purposes and uses of both process and product evaluation data. Chapter 6 "Implementing the Evaluation Plan: Planning, Forming Questions, Seeking Answers" by Harry N. Drier, C. D. Johnson, Sharon K. Johnson, and Edwin A. Whitfield describes the process of developing an evaluation plan in a step-by-step format. The Epilogue "The Person-Oriented Approach in Evaluating Career Guidance Programs" by John O. Crites discusses how career guidance programs will be evaluated in the future. Appendix A "Needs Assessment Models: What, Why, When, and When Not" by C. D. Johnson and Edwin A. Whitfield describes five types of needs assessment models. References for evaluation resources are included. (ABL)

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# EVALUATING GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

## A Practitioner's Guide

Sharon K. Johnson and Edwin A. Whitfield

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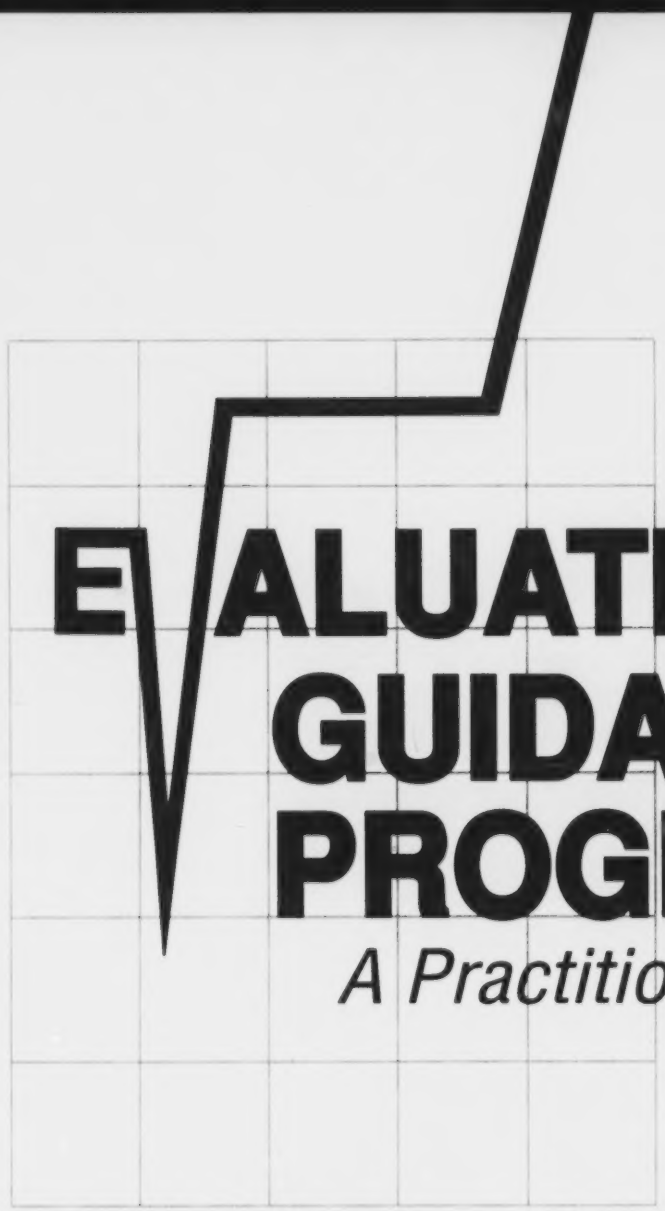

# EVALUATING GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

## *A Practitioner's Guide*

*Sharon K. Johnson and Edwin A. Whitfield*
*with*
*John O. Crites, Harry N. Drier,*
*Norman C. Gysbers, C. D. Johnson*

*A joint project of*
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## Preface

This book was developed through a cooperative effort of The National Consortium of State Career Guidance Supervisors and American College Testing (ACT) and is jointly owned by the two organizations. The Consortium will receive a share of the proceeds from sale of the *Guide* to support its research and development efforts. Member states will also benefit through significant discounts on the cost of the *Guide*.

The Consortium is a coalition of guidance representatives from participating state and territorial departments of education dedicated to enhancing career guidance and counseling, leadership, research, and dissemination in education. The Consortium's goal is to provide a framework for improving the effectiveness of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary programs, counselor education, and supervision and administration of career guidance programs. The objectives of the Consortium are

- to provide a vehicle that brings states together to support mutual priorities, ongoing programs, and career development and prevocational services
- to promote the improvement and further development of career guidance at all levels of education
- to involve business, industry, and government in developing and evaluating quality career guidance programs
- to provide a structure for seeking resources from public and private sources for program improvement and expansion
- to provide technical assistance to states in developing their annual and long-term plans related to career guidance and counseling

At various stages during the *Guide's* development, most of the Consortium members had the opportunity to review outlines and drafts of the manuscript. Their suggestions were greatly appreciated by the team of developers and, we believe, have enhanced the utility of the final product. Our thanks go to the Consortium board of directors and members.

S. K. J.
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# Introduction

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*"Which way do I go?" said Alice. "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat. "I don't much care where," said Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the cat. "So long as I get somewhere," Alice added as an explanation.*

(Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*)

## *Purpose of the Guide*

Evaluation is an integral part of every program and when considered during the program development stage, assures clear, measurable goals. In guidance, traditional services frequently have been evaluated after the fact, without the benefit of clear goals being established from the beginning. Therefore, counselors have found themselves in the situation of being evaluated by students, parents, administrators, and community members based on individual perceptions of "what the counselor is supposed to do" rather than on established criteria for predetermined student results. Traditionally, counselors have defined their jobs in terms of the processes they use and then have been evaluated by counting the number of students utilizing the services offered. Metaphorically, it is akin to shooting an arrow at the wall and then drawing a target around it rather than drawing a clear target, shooting at the target, and then measuring how close one came to hitting the bull's-eye.

It is often said in education, as well as in other fields, that what gets measured gets done. Current trends in education which focus on results are identified as outcome-based education, competency-based education, and results-based education. Similarly, a growing number of guidance professionals have aligned their guidance programs with the results-based trends in education. After being torn between defining themselves as mental health professionals, "mini-shrinks," or administrative aides, guidance professionals are now clearly identifying themselves as educators, responsible for teaching students specified knowledge, attitudes, and skills in guidance-related areas such as learning-to-learn, learning-to-work, and learning-to-relate effectively to self and others. When seen in this light, the counselor becomes an important part of the evaluation process and uses evaluation data on a daily basis to improve the pro[illegible] in a heuristic manner.

Often literature on program evaluation seems to focus on information writ[illegible] researchers and evaluators for other researchers and evaluators. Many district[illegible] establish departments of evaluation that design guidance program evaluation strategies, often with little input or involvement by counselors. This misconstrued perception of evaluation as being primarily external to the program has been especially hurtful to guidance programs. The service or process nature of traditional guidance, compounded by counselors' not having specific content objectives, has caused evaluation efforts to focus on subjective and somewhat uncontrollable results, such as, "Do you like your

counselor? What is your counselor's name? Was your counselor helpful? How often did you see your counselor?" Given the fact that students are often referred to guidance for purposes not valued by the student (behavior problems, class changes, parent conferences, or poor grades), evaluation has become a feared and avoided function.

This *Guide* was developed by guidance professionals interested in including counselors in evaluation efforts. Traditionally, the language and purpose of evaluation and the appropriate use of findings have not necessarily been applicable for counselors' use. However, evaluation can and should provide counselors with essential information for decision making, problem solving, resource allocation, modification of processes, and communication with other decision makers such as administrators, school board members, and community groups.

## *Benefits of Evaluation*

Evaluation is only beneficial if the data collected are related to the decisions being considered. Evaluation is the collection and reporting of information that is useful, in decision making, to see whether or not results have been attained, and to ascertain the effects of a program. For the purposes of this *Guide*, evaluation is defined as "a process designed to provide data comparing results with purposes."

Evaluation seeks to answer the following questions (Kaufman, 1980):

1. What are the goals of the organization? (Do the guidance goals reflect the mission, philosophy, and goals of the school board?)
2. What results are intended by the program?
3. What results are obtained by the program?
4. What are the value and usefulness of the methods and means used to achieve the results?
5. How well is the program administered and managed?
6. What, if anything, about the program should be changed?
7. What, if anything, about the program should be continued?
8. Should the program exist at all?

When evaluation is viewed as a judgmental process in which the results are used in hurtful or punitive ways, it ceases to be a useful program development and improvement tool. When it is seen as an ongoing, changing, dynamic part of the guidance program, however, it is invaluable to the growth and improvement of the program. The counselors' understanding of the process, their involvement in the development of evaluation strategies, their inclusion in program improvement decisions, and their ability to use evaluation data in their daily as well as long range planning enables evaluation to take on an increasingly significant role in the field of guidance.

Likewise, the participation of administrators, staff, parents, and community in evaluation design, data collection, and decision making can serve to strengthen the sense of commitment and interest of others in the guidance program and its results. If the purpose of the guidance program is for all students to gain the specified guidance competencies, then it is incumbent upon counselors to involve other adults who affect a student's development (teachers, parents, and community members) in helping to provide and reinforce the guidance competencies. Participation of others in the evaluation process makes the goals of the program visible and understandable to others. Of course, there are also dangers in involving non-educators and non-guidance professionals. By observing some caution in the scope of involvement, however, and by clearly defining the parameters of each group's involvement, participation by others can provide a more diverse and comprehensive overview of the program results.

## *Assumptions*

An attempt has been made to start from ground zero, so that counselors and others who have had little experience in program evaluation can follow the process step by step, with resources identified from districts throughout the nation. It is recognized that there is no one accepted model of guidance, and therefore the authors have presented evaluation ideas that can be adapted for different models. Also, evaluation samples have been drawn from a variety of program perspectives.

There is a need in guidance to go beyond the traditional pre/post research-based evaluation models and to provide results-based models that are useful to counselors. There is also a need to provide counselors with resources they can use in helping others avoid evaluating their guidance program based on inappropriate data such as standardized test scores, college admittance to "prestigious" schools, and number of scholarships awarded. Evaluation uses data collection and measurement to compare the data against an established standard and to identify gaps or discrepancies between current results and desired results in order to: (1) determine what should be done to close the gaps and (2) assure that counselors can pick the best means to achieve the desired results (Kaufman, 1980). Therefore, evaluation findings focus on what works to reach the intended goal (successes) rather than on rating individual counselor effectiveness or the level of student participation in guidance processes.

## *Possible Obstacles*

In preparing this *Guide*, the authors listened to the concerns of counselors, supervisors, and state level guidance professionals in an effort to address the problems perceived by practitioners. The following constraints were mentioned as obstacles to be addressed:

1. Most districts do not have a budget for counselors to evaluate their programs. Therefore, many guidance evaluations are done by a department of evaluation and research or by outside evaluators. Consequently, many school-based staff members have come to believe that evaluation is external to as well as irrelevant to the daily work done in schools. Although counselors may be called on to participate in evaluation projects, these efforts are often perceived as the part of the job called "other duties as assigned."

   **It is the purpose of this *Guide* to provide evaluation strategies that are an integral part of the ongoing guidance program, needing no additional funding or resources. As counselors assume ownership for data collection as part of their guidance plan, evaluation becomes a self-correcting process that is both formative and summative in nature and relates directly to the counselor's daily activities.**

2. Evaluation findings have frequently been used to criticize guidance counselors and have focused on negative results. Therefore, counselors and other educators have grown to fear evaluation.

   **When evaluation data are used as part of the counselor's planning process, the counselor gains control of the ability to address needs, that is, discrepancies in results, as gaps become obvious. In this way, there are no surprises and the program can be adapted at any time to address specific concerns. This approach reduces the opportunity for others to use evaluation "against" counselors, since counselors are part of the evaluation design and subsequent decision making. "The terms evaluation, testing, and measurement sound depersonalizing, and some educators infer that people are being separated from their humanity, competence, caring, and sensitivity. Good evaluation does not confuse those concepts with blaming and buck-passing" (Kaufman, 1980).**

3. There is confusion between tests and evaluation. Tests are seen as causing more paperwork with little return for the counselor.

   **"Evaluation uses testing (data collecting), measurement (the method of applying standards to behaviors), and evaluation to place values and worth among alternative activities, events, and results" (Kaufman, 1980). Counselors must be willing to move beyond determining only the extent and worth of what is and relate evaluation to useful change. When used in this manner, evaluation is more than comparing that which was intended and moves to consideration of the new, the useful, and the creative in terms of possible purposes and needs. Counselors welcome the continuing flow of data as a means of increasing their personal effectiveness and creativity.**

4. There is a fear that evaluation will be used statewide or districtwide to expose differences among schools, which will be perceived by the public as lack of effectiveness.

**Reading, understanding, and acting upon the results of an evaluation are equally important in the evaluation process. The evaluation report becomes an important tool in defining how the results are perceived and used. Chapter Five of this manual addresses the many issues involved in using and reporting data. The misuse of data is an ongoing problem in education and is currently being addressed on many fronts, including the testing companies, such as American College Testing and Educational Testing Services, which have been leaders in identifying appropriate and inappropriate use of testing data.**

## *Audience*

The audience for this *Guide* includes program planners, program implementers, and recipients of guidance evaluation reports. School counselors, managers of guidance at the district, county, and state levels, decision makers and opinion leaders, and the general public all have a stake in assuring that students benefit from the guidance program. It is expected that the practical step-by-step suggestions, the different perspective on guidance evaluation, and the cautions relating to the inappropriate use of evaluation data will serve all the audiences of this manual.

## *How This Guide Can Be Used*

This *Guide* can provide a comprehensive program evaluation or can be used to evaluate only selected parts of a program. It is recognized that some schools or school districts will have a results-based guidance program in place that is ready for evaluation, while others may need a year or more before the basic program elements are designed and implemented for a results-based orientation. Therefore, this program manual is recommended for:

1. Total program evaluation only if all program elements are in place and ready for evaluation
2. Evaluation of a specific aspect or element of a program such as:
   a. evaluability (whether or not the program is ready to be evaluated; a program audit is presented to help with this determination)
   b. guidance resources and guidance processes (means used to obtain results, which may include staff, time, strategies, facilities, materials)
   c. student competencies (short-range results, en-route indicators)
   d. student terminal competencies/goals (at time of leaving school)
   e. long-range outcomes (follow-up studies, impact three, five, ten years after graduation)

3. Addressing specific evaluation questions/issues, such as what kind of additional resources are needed to ensure that all students attain the desired competencies
4. A cookbook of evaluation strategies, tools, techniques, and examples.

## Content

**Chapter 1** is an introduction to evaluation concepts, including:

- Definition and purpose of program evaluation
- Differences between research and evaluation
- Differences between results-based and services-based guidance models
- Description of two different results-based models
- Identification of what is evaluated (content of a guidance program)
- Similarities between evaluation of guidance and the evaluation of other educational programs
- Relationship of evaluation terminology and program elements

**Chapter 2** introduces the elements common to results-based guidance models.

- Standards for determining whether a program is results-based
- Linkages between district purpose/mission and guidance program
- Assessing three kinds of results
- Identification of system elements and criteria for each element
- Putting it all together in a systemic results-based guidance program
- Description of differences between various results-based guidance programs

**Chapter 3** examines the readiness of a guidance program for results evaluation.

Every guidance program must contain basic program elements before it can be considered ready to be evaluated. While not every program will have all of the elements, without the requisite elements only limited aspects can be evaluated, and the findings and recommendations may not reflect the actual needs of the students, staff, or program.

- When is guidance a program?
- What are the basic elements of a guidance program?
  - Program structure, processes, and activities
  - Program content
  - Program resources
- How are identified standards used and a program audit completed?
- How are time and task distribution analyzed?

**Chapter 4** provides criteria for determining whether a guidance program is results-based for the purposes of program evaluation. It also addresses assessment strategies for three kinds of student results (immediate, intermediate, and long-range), with examples of how to assess each.

- Introduction of the elements of a results-based program
- Linkages between district, school, and guidance program purpose
- Assessing results
- Collecting data for planned results and unplanned-for results
- Putting it all together in a plan
- Program goals and criteria for success
- Evaluation strategies for long-range results
- Counselor accountability for results

**Chapter 5** addresses the purposes and uses of both process and product evaluation data.

- Types of evaluation
- Types of data collected
- Uses of evaluation
- Decisions and actions
- Audiences
- Evaluation reports: Content, format, and methods

**Chapter 6** describes the process of developing an evaluation plan in a step-by-step format. The planning process, forming the questions to be addressed, and seeking answers by analysis of data are included.

- The way that different evaluation models organize the evaluation elements
- Differences between process and results evaluation
- Questions to be addressed according to the program area being evaluated
- Sample evaluation questions for use with a variety of participants, sampling different areas covered within the guidance program
- Variety of ways to collect data and when to use each
- Step-by-step plan for implementing a guidance evaluation

## Epilogue and Appendices

The epilogue and appendices have been arranged to provide some specific examples of evaluation elements.

Epilogue—The person-oriented approach in evaluating career guidance programs (an example using specific instruments and processes)

Appendix A—Needs assessment models (descriptions of various types of needs data and instruments)

Appendix B—References for evaluation resources

## Diversity of Viewpoints

This *Guide* was developed over a three-year period with input from a number of experts and practitioners in the field of guidance and counseling. All the contributors met several times to discuss evaluation of guidance programs. Although each had a different idea about how best to develop a results-based guidance program, there was consensus on the need to evaluate the effectiveness of guidance in terms of student outcomes.

The diversity of viewpoints presented in this book reflects the many different kinds of results-based programs found in school systems. To prevent confusion, an effort has been made to use consistent terminology throughout. In cases where authors use different terms for similar elements, all other terms used in this *Guide* have been included in parentheses immediately following. In addition, the definitions of similar terms have been included in Chapter 1.

## References

Carroll, Lewis (1885). *Alice in wonderland.*

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CHAPTER

ONE

# What Is Guidance Program Evaluation?

Sharon K. Johnson, California State University, Los Angeles

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- define guidance program evaluation.
- define the purpose of guidance program evaluation.
- explain the difference between research and evaluation.
- identify the differences between results and services-based guidance models.
- differentiate between guidance means and ends for evaluation purposes.
- describe similarities and differences between two different approaches to results-based guidance programs.
- recognize the similarities between guidance program evaluation and evaluation of other educational programs.
- recognize specific evaluation terms as they relate to guidance program elements.
- identify the elements common to all results-based guidance programs.

*"**Faith, hope,** and **charity** have characterized the American attitude toward guidance programs—**faith** in their effectiveness, **hope** that they can meet important if not always clearly specified need, and **charity** in not demanding more evaluative evidence that the faith and hope are justified."*

(Tamminen and Miller, 1968, 3)

To address the definition and purpose of program evaluation, one must first understand the purpose of the program being evaluated, as well as the purpose of evaluation. To evaluate guidance results, the guidance program must be defined in terms of the desired student results rather than in terms of the processes/activities provided by the guidance program. For the purposes of this *Guide,* it is assumed that the defined purpose of the guidance program is to *ensure that all students gain competencies* in the areas of learning, working, and relating to self and others. In other words, the guidance program is designed to provide a framework which enables a variety of professionals within the school working together to ensure that all students have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will allow them to become successful while they are in school and later in their post-high school endeavors. Evaluation identifies the extent to which students have gained the expected competencies.

## Definition and Purpose of Program Evaluation

Evaluation is the collection and reporting of information that is useful in decision making. It is a process designed to provide data for management decisions while the activities are being implemented as well as at the end of the activities.

The primary purpose of program evaluation is to provide guidance workers with evidence of their contributions (achievements/successes) that will then allow them to focus efforts on improving an activity or set of activities. Evaluation can also be used to show that a specific goal has been reached. The primary purpose for collecting information is to guide future actions to improve future results. In short, "The purpose of evaluation is . . . to improve" (Stufflebeam, Foley, Gephart, Guba, Hammond, Merriman, and Provus, 1971).

Evaluation is not synonymous with research. Evaluation is a judgmental process that requires an assignment of value to the data in informed management decision-making activities. "Decision making is a subjective act in which value judgments are applied to evidence produced by evaluation . . . But the decision makers, not the evidence, make the decision" (Mitchell, 1984, 2). Evaluation considers a variety of types of relevant data or information in determining progress toward a goal or worth of a program. "In educational evaluation, all available types of data, qualitative as well as quantitative, may be brought to bear" (Noll and Scannell, 1972, 15). Evaluation data must be not only accurate but also related to the appropriate purpose.

On the other hand, research most often focuses on whether one process is more effective than another process and whether either is more effective than no process in reaching a predetermined goal or objective. This method is ineffective and, in some cases, unethical when working with students to help meet their goals. Counselors will continually change processes during their work with individual students or groups if they find what they are doing is ineffective or if another process appears to better meet the immediate needs of clients. It is the heuristic nature of the guidance process that presents difficulty with traditional experimental research methods.

## *Differences Between Results-Based and Services-Based Guidance Models*

There are clear differences between results-based and services-based guidance models. Results-based programs identify the student as the primary client and define the program in terms of the specific competencies that each student will achieve. Services-based models focus on the identification of the specific services/processes available for students, such as counseling, placement, and coordination. Results-based programs are planned and implemented for all students; services-based models are planned and implemented to provide an opportunity for students to benefit if they choose, request, or are required to use a service. Results-based programs are evaluated on the competencies students acquire, services-based models are usually evaluated on how many students used the services and how they felt about the services.

Results-based programs are usually proactive; services-based models are reactive. In order to reach all students, a results-based program must utilize a comprehensive, systematic, sequential, and flexible approach; a services-based approach offers specific processes that are constant. Results-based programs utilize and appreciate individual strengths and interests of professionals; services-based models are characterized by all professionals following similar "roles and functions" and being appreciated for doing the same as their colleagues in an efficient and timely manner.

This *Guide* provides guidelines for determining the effects that a results-based guidance program has on all students. There has been no attempt to include information on how to evaluate a services-based guidance model.

## *Two Different Results-Based Models*

Results-based guidance programs have evolved from the belief that students need a comprehensive developmental guidance program. The difference between results-based guidance and guidance services is a basic philosophical difference between offering students an opportunity to experience and benefit from guidance at their own request and providing a planned, sequential program in which counselors take responsibility for assuring that all students gain specific guidance-related competencies (knowledge, attitudes, skills).

There are several models and approaches to results-based guidance, which have definite similarities and differences. Two different models are presented, with different perspectives but with agreement on the importance of student attainment of specified guidance-related outcomes as the primary focus of a planned, sequential guidance program.

The differences between the two results-based guidance programs presented in this document relate to the management philosophies underlying each. The first results-based program (Chapter 2), called "competency-based guidance," argues that if the desired result remains constant, the process cannot remain constant. In order to achieve the desired program results for all students, a variety of processes are used to accommodate individual staff differences (interests, expertise, etc.), student differences (learning style, developmental stage, needs, etc.), and resources. If the process is held constant, program results will necessarily vary. In this model, the results are established as a given for the program, but the specific contributions of individual counselors are agreements forged between counselor and administrator. The agreements on contributions and the plans to achieve the agreed-upon results must be flexible and must change as the needs change.

The second program (Chapter 3), called "time-on-task," addresses the need for counselors to spend all their time on guidance-related processes. Therefore, an attempt is made to define a balanced program which includes specific processes (curriculum, classroom units, group and individual counseling) and mandated time allocations for each. The definition of counselor contributions and plans is defined as an integral part of the guidance program. It is also results based because it has defined student outcomes as the basis for program evaluation. Although there is more definition of processes to be used in the delivery of student results, it is the attainment of student results that shapes the program.

## *What Is Evaluated*

Guidance has a body of knowledge (content) within the educational, career, personal, and social domains. Through the guidance program students acquire competencies in learning how to learn (knowledge of self as a lifelong learner and the skills to be a learner), learning about the world of work and gaining skills in becoming a worker, learning to relate to others, and developing good mental health practices. The progress of students in gaining knowledge, attitudes, and skills in the guidance-related content areas is the focus of results-based evaluation.

When the targets (student competencies) are defined ahead of time, the evaluation becomes a means of measuring how close the program comes to reaching the target, in order to provide for correction in the processes for the purpose of achieving total success or improving the program. Conversely, when the target has not been clearly defined, the evaluation becomes a process of "bean-counting," that is, counting how many students experienced each guidance activity irrespective of the results attained.

Judging program effectiveness on the basis of student participation is ineffective because there may be little relationship between participation and competencies attained. This becomes evident if we equate guidance program outcomes with the outcomes of other curriculum programs; i.e., the number of students taking a particular class does not necessarily correlate with the number of students mastering the skills being taught.

The specifics of *what* gets measured are related to *when* results are measured. Evaluation takes place concurrent with the program activities as well as at the end of activities, but what gets measured may be different.

1. During program implementation, specific student knowledge, skills, and attitudes are assessed in much the same way they would be assessed in a regular classroom at the end of a lesson or activity. This evaluation is an ongoing part of the guidance program data collected on a regular basis, compiled, and reported periodically for accountability reasons.
2. At the time the student leaves school, the goals (which are a composite of competencies taught throughout the program) should be assessed. Indicators may include completion of high school requirements, acceptance into a post-high school program of choice, employment, and development of realistic post-high school career and educational plans. Other individual competencies may include evidence of decision-making skills, interpersonal skills, study skills, knowledge of personal aptitudes and interests, knowledge of related occupations, etc.
3. Three to five to ten years after graduation, outcome or impact assessment focuses on whether the student has assumed a productive role in society as a citizen, an employed worker, and a contributing member of a community, a family, and society.

## *Similarities Between the Evaluation of Guidance and the Evaluation of Other Educational Programs*

Recently, much has been written about outcome-based education related to a number of different curriculum areas. Guidance has a curriculum (content) that can be evaluated much as other curriculum areas are evaluated. How the students feel about the skills attained is less important than what the students have learned or the skills they have acquired. Although attitudes and opinions are important within the guidance program, often students cannot judge the importance or relevance of competencies at the time they are being learned; however, they may be critically important to the students' success in school and later on.

It is not necessary that standardized instruments or quantitative data become the only evidence seen as valid in the measurement of guidance competencies. It is important that more than one type of measurement be used to determine program effectiveness. As in other curriculum areas, a test may be used to determine a student's attainment, but qualitative contributions such as class discussions, homework, and projects are also used and valued.

Long-range program results are best measured by examining evidence of demonstrated competencies as they are used in life decisions. Long-range results are the cumulative effect of all of the student's life experiences and, therefore, cannot be directly and solely attributed to the guidance program or to the educational system. However, evaluating the successes and failures of graduates gives us a clue to program strengths and deficiencies that may make a difference in students' lives.

## *Relationship of Evaluation Terminology to Program Elements*

Figures 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 (C. D. Johnson and Sharon K. Johnson, 1983) indicate the relationship between many of the evaluation terms used in education and the elements of a guidance program. What is evaluated, who should do the evaluation, when evaluation is done, who is evaluated, and suggested strategies are listed to provide a framework for evaluation terminology.

| MEANS (PROCESSES) | | ENDS (RESULTS) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **INPUTS** | **PROCESSES** | **PRODUCTS** | **OUTPUTS** | **OUTCOMES** |
| • Counselors | • Counseling | • Student Competencies | • Goals | • Philosophy |
| • Tests and Scores | • Group Guidance | • Learner Outcomes | • Summative Data | • Purpose |
| • Career Information | • Planning | • Learner Objectives | • Terminal Performances | • Impact |
| • College Catalogues | • Management Activities | • Formative Data | • Graduation Completion | • Summative |
| • Film Strips | • Assemblies | • En-route Indicators | • Completed Training | • Societal Consequencs |
| • Time | • Parent Conferences | | | |
| | • Staff Development | | | |
| | • Referrals | | | |
| | • Homework | | | |

**Figure 1.1**
**Relationships of Evaluation Terminology With Organizational Elements Model**

1. **Inputs, resources.** These terms refer to the basic ingredients of a guidance program—the people, facilities, time, materials, and supplies.
2. **Processes, activities.** The "hows" of guidance program implementation. These strategies are designed and used in a flexible manner to help reach the desired student results. Processes will vary according to the student populations (the success of specific processes used with regular students may differ from those used with Special Education students or with fifth graders vs. seniors in high school); the

individual counselor's competencies (some counselors are more successful with large group than with small group counseling, while others prefer working with individual students); the available resources (some schools may have comprehensive career centers, while others have only small resource corners in the school library); or other conditions that affect the program.

3. **Results, outcomes, products, goals, en-route indicators, impact.** These refer to the attainment of competencies as a result of a guidance program activity or process. Guidance competencies are attained throughout the student's educational career. However, immediate competencies will differ from terminal (cumulative) competencies. For example, knowledge of one's educational strengths and weaknesses is an immediate knowledge competency, which, when combined with other competencies will be used in the development of a life career plan (a terminal competency).
4. **Program audit, means evaluation.** A program audit is used to determine that a guidance program exists. A program cannot be evaluated until certain criteria are met (see Chapter 3). The program audit determines that appropriate means (resources and processes) are in place. If there are no counselors, no materials, or no guidance program activities, there is no guidance program to be evaluated. Contrary to the traditional perception of guidance services, hiring counselors to sit in offices to see students on a first-come, first-serve basis is not a guidance program and therefore cannot be evaluated for student results.

| | Inputs | Processes | Products | Outputs | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **What** | • Documented Time<br>• Funds for Materials, Persons, etc.<br>• Resources such as Persons and Materials | • How Many Went Through A Process or Activity | • Continual Verification<br>• Educational Plan<br>• Friends<br>• Contributions to School, Home, Community | • College Acceptance<br>• Employment<br>• Advanced Training Plans | • Financial Independence<br>• Productive Community Roles<br>• Positive Relationships with Others |
| **How** | • Audits | • Sign-in sheets<br>• Roll sheets | • Results of Paper/Pencil Inventories<br>• Discussions<br>• Observations | • Review and Validate Documents<br>• Interviews | • 1, 3, 5, 10-Year Follow-up by Mail, Phone, Personal Interviews |
| **Who** | • Counselors<br>• Administrators | • Counselors | • Counselor<br>• Parent<br>• Teacher<br>• Peer | • Persons Internal to the School or System<br>• Persons External to the School or System<br>• Employees<br>• College Admissions Officers | • Persons External to the School or System<br>• Persons Internal to the School or System<br>• Community<br>• Society |

**Figure 1.2**
**Alternative Evaluation Strategies:**
**The What, The How, and The Who**

| | Resources<br>• Inputs | Processes<br>• Activities<br>• Services | Immediate Results<br>• Student Competencies<br>• Products<br>• Learner Objectives<br>• Micro-Results | | Intermediate Results<br>• Goals<br>• Outputs<br>• Macro-Results | | Long-range Results<br>• Purpose<br>• Outcomes<br>• Mega-Results |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Competencies | Impact | Goal | Impact | Impact |
| **Who** | Administrators, counselors | Secretary, parents, counselors, volunteers, learners | Counselors, teachers, Career Technician, parents, learners | Counselors, school administrator | Counselors, Central Office personnel, learners | Central Office personnel | Central Office personnel |
| **How** | Increase/decrease in money, persons involved, materials, cost per participant | Counting persons going through a process or using a service: paper-pencil test asking perceptions of how a person feels about it—if s/he likes process/service, was it helpful | Observing, discussion, paper-pencil test, completing a learning or career activity packet, recording verification, Career Planning Folder | Changes in available data on drop-outs, attendance, referrals, program changes, failures, standardized tests, other | Interview, check education & career plans, paper-pencil test, simulated demonstrations, portfolio review, other | Use available data (dropouts, grades, test data, vandalism, referrals, juvenile crime, etc.) career plans: random sample through intervention methods, other | Follow-ups, written surveys, data retrieval, phone calls, personal interviews, state and federal data bases, criminality, college completion, employment, advanced training, community involvement, other |
| **Population** | Number of persons getting assistance | Those participating in a process or using a service | All students, staff and/or parents participating in the activity | Specific students' behavior changes for all or sub-populations | Graduating seniors, drop-outs, program completors | Graduating seniors, drop-outs, program completors | Stratified random sample of graduating seniors |
| **When** | After activity has been completed | During activity or at the end | Immediately at the end of the activity | Ongoing | Last semester of school or end of program | When time allows | (Suggest) 1, 3, 5, and 10 years after graduation |

**Figure 1.3**
**Who, How, Population, When**

5. **Evaluation, research.** Evaluation and research differ in terms of purpose, audience, results, and social utility. Experimental research designs are impractical for ongoing program evaluation purposes and do little to help counselors and other decision makers determine the next steps in program improvement.
6. **Purpose, mission.** The reason a program exists is defined in the mission and/or purpose statement. It is the purpose/mission that is evaluated to determine long-range impact. Data on students one, three, five, and ten years after graduation tell whether the program accomplished what it was intended to accomplish.
7. **Philosophy, assumptions.** The philosophy or assumptions define the guiding principles and guidelines for the program. Sometimes defined as a series of "We believe" or "We agree" statements, the philosophical tenets must be accepted by and adhered to by all practitioners. For example, a key concept for consideration in a results-based guidance program is whether the program intends to guarantee results for *all* students. Before such a stance can be agreed upon, the implications for evaluation must be understood by all concerned.

8. **Immediate, intermediate (terminal), long-range results.** Immediate results may also be referred to as student competencies. The results of a given process or activity, intermediate or terminal results are determined at the time the student leaves or graduates from school. In some models, the terminal results are called competencies, in others, they are referred to as goals. Long-range results are determined three to five years after graduation and help to evaluate whether the program has met the intended purpose or mission.

Although some of these terms are used differently in different programs, there is agreement on the need for: (1) an overall statement or statements of intentionality (often called a purpose or a mission statement); (2) statements of the guiding principles or tenets of the program (philosophy); (3) specific goals or student outcomes intended for all students; (4) definition/description of guidance program content (may be in the form of a conceptual model); (5) activities/processes designed to help students attain the stated goals/competencies; (6) resources assigned by school administration for the express purpose of meeting guidance goals; and (7) needs assessment which may be done either deductively (prior to program development), or inductively (after desired program results are defined in order to determine needs within the defined program parameters).

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CHAPTER

TWO

# Results-Based Guidance Programs

C. D. Johnson, Johnson and Associates

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- list the standards necessary to determine whether a guidance program qualifies as "results-based."
- explain the necessary linkages between a district purpose/mission and the purpose of the district guidance program.
- define three kinds of results in terms of what the student will learn.
- list the system elements of a results-based guidance program and identify the criteria related to each element.
- explain how the elements of a results-based program fit together to provide a comprehensive program of student results.

Results-based guidance programs provide answers to the questions *"How do students benefit from guidance?"* and *"How are students different because of guidance or student support programs?"* In results- or competency-based programs, the student is the primary client and the program is evaluated on the competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) that the students acquire.

A guidance program is results-based when it has *(a)* clearly delineated results (immediate, intermediate, and long-range) and *(b)* means and resources to achieve the results. A guidance program is results-based when the following criteria (or standards) are in place:

1. A *statement of purpose or mission* that defines the intention of the program in terms of its long-range impact on students and is directly linked with the board of education's statement of purpose or mission.
2. *Intermediate student results* or *program goals* that indicate what students will know and/or be able to do as a result of the guidance program by the time they graduate from the school district.
3. *Immediate results* (or *student competencies*) that define the knowledge, attitudes, or skills that students will acquire as a result of guidance program activities throughout their school career.
4. A *clear definition of the guidance content* to be learned and assessed. This definition may be in the form of a glossary or a separate document and forms the curriculum that is to be delivered through the instructional process in order to assist students to achieve and demonstrate the results described above. The processes (individual/group counseling, guidance classes, teacher-led units, special events, parent activities, etc.) will vary depending on the expected results, student readiness, staff competencies, available resources, and organizational policies and procedures.

The three kinds of results (immediate, intermediate, and long-range) are defined in terms of what the student will learn and be able to do, not in terms of services the student received or the student's participation in guidance activities.

The following set of elements (see Figure 2.1) and related criteria (Johnson and Johnson, 1982) offer an example of a results-based guidance program.

## *Elements of a Results-Based Guidance Program*

**1.0 Statement of Purpose or Mission**

The statement of purpose or mission defines the intention of the program and indicates the student results three, five, or ten years after high school. The desired long-range impact of the guidance program must directly link with the statement of purpose or mission of the Board of Education and administration. The statement of purpose defines why guidance exists in the schools and is the bottom line when assessing the success of a program. Are the students ultimately successful in the world as a result of their education?

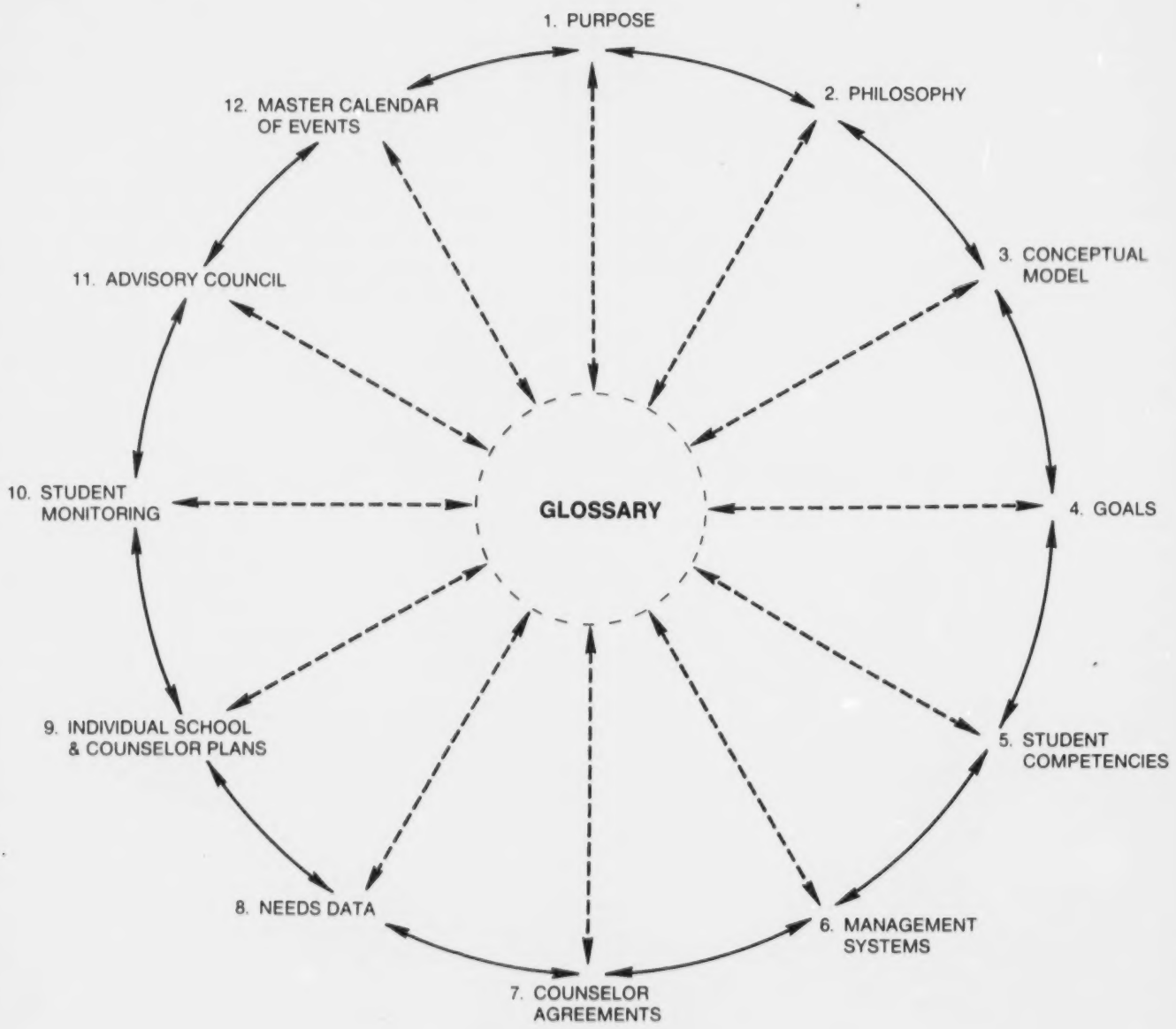


**Figure 2.1**
**Systems Approach to Guidance**
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The criteria for the statement of purpose for a results-based program differ from those for a services-based program, which may indicate that the program is available to all students or that any student has an opportunity to benefit from the program. A results-based program speaks to the competencies that are to be acquired by *all* students, not just those who opt to take advantage of them.

**Criteria.** The statement of purpose

1.1. is written with the student as the primary client.
1.2. is written for all students.
1.3. indicates categories of content or skills to be learned.
1.4. links with the statement of purpose or mission of the administration or board of education.

**2.0 Statement of Philosophy**

The philosophy is an articulated set of principles and beliefs that guide the student support or guidance staff in the development, implementation, management, and evaluation of the results-based program. To make this a usable vehicle within the program development efforts, consensus and clear understanding of each statement are necessary. For example, if the staff states that student progress will be monitored by the parent and student, there are important implications about how the professionals will be involved in the process. Therefore, the statement of philosophy becomes the foundation that supports and, in part, defines all other program elements.

**Criteria.** The statement of philosophy

2.1. addresses all students.
2.2. focuses on primary prevention and student development.
2.3. identifies persons to be involved in the delivery of activities.
2.4. identifies who will plan and manage the program.
2.5. defines management system to be used.
2.6. indicates how and by whom the program will be evaluated.
2.7. indicates who will be responsible for monitoring students' progress.
2.8. indicates when and how counselors will maintain their professional competencies.
2.9. indicates the ethical guidelines for the program.

**3.0 Conceptual Model**

A conceptual model of guidance provides the program with a structure for the definition of goals and related competencies. This structure defines the domains (education, career, personal/social, leisure), the developmental level (K-12, staff, and parents), and the types of competencies (knowledge, attitudes, and skills).

**Criteria.** The conceptual model

3.1. focuses the program on all domains of guidance.
3.2. provides a structure to organize goals and competencies.
3.3. identifies the developmental focus for the guidance program.

### 4.0 Goals

Goals, an extension of the purpose statement, define the specific desired student results to be achieved by the time the student leaves school. The goals are stated in terms of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for the student to become successful in the world of higher education, advanced training, the world of work, or other meaningful endeavors in the adult world. The goals are written in global terms for each of the domains identified in the conceptual model.

**Criteria.** Goals

4.1. are expressed in terms of what students are expected to achieve.
4.2. are linked to the statement of purpose.
4.3. include learning to learn (educational domain), work (career domain), relate (personal/social domain), and use leisure time effectively (leisure domain).

### 5.0 Competencies

Competencies are developed proficiencies (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) that are observable, transferable from a learning situation to a real-life situation, and directly linked to a guidance goal. Competencies are used by counselors, students, parents, and staff to measure whether students are moving toward the stated goals. Competencies are sometimes referred to as formative indicators or as behavioral objectives.

**Criteria.** Competencies

5.1. are organized into content areas as defined in the guidance goal.
5.2. are ordered to match developmental stages of students by grade level.
5.3. are measurable.

### 6.0 Management System

The management system establishes accountability for specific results and indicates who will be responsible for students acquiring predetermined competencies, which data will be generated, how the data will be collected, and when the data will be submitted to the administrator. There is a clear division between the student results, for which counselors assume accountability, and duties assigned by administration. A clear definition of the reciprocal responsibilities of the program manager (usually a school administrator) and the counselor facilitates communication and the flow of data—vital to making necessary mid-course corrections in program plans.

**Criteria.** The management system ensures that

6.1. each counselor has responsibility for producing specific student results.
6.2. all goals are addressed.
6.3. all students are included in the agreed-upon results.
6.4. there is a clear division between student results, for which counselors assume responsibilities, and duties assigned by administration.
6.5. there is an established timeline for using and for reporting assessed evidence of results to appropriate administrative personnel.
6.6. there is a systematic method of monitoring guidance activities.
6.7. each step of the management system process has reciprocal responsibility by the counselor and program manager.
6.8. each counselor produces a plan for how guidance results will be accomplished.

**7.0 Results Agreements**

Results agreements are responsibility statements formulated by each counselor that specify the results for which she/he will be accountable. Results agreements are expressed in terms of the competencies students will achieve, are closely linked to the program goals and include a separate section for all assigned duties. The administrator responsible for the guidance program is active in the negotiation of the results agreements, and the program manager audits the results agreements to ensure that the assigned duties do not place a disproportionate burden on teachers.

**Criteria.** In drafting a results agreement, it is crucial that

7.1. specific desired results are delineated for students, parents, and staff.
7.2. results are stated in measurable terms so that results can be documented.
7.3. the agreement is consistent with and related to program goals and competencies.
7.4. the program manager (administrator) is actively involved in the negotiations of the results agreements.
7.5. the negotiated results agreement is validated by the signatures of the counselor and administrator.

**8.0 Needs Data**

Needs—the gaps between desired results and results being achieved—are directly related to the goals and student competencies defined for the program.

Traditionally, needs assessments have been used deductively, to seek information from program participants regarding program design and direction based on their perceived needs. An inductive program, on the other hand, uses needs assessment to validate the program goals and indicate priorities within the program parameters. Inductive needs assessments allow the professional staff to use their expertise and the structure provided by a conceptual model to design a comprehensive program to meet the needs of all students, rather than limiting the program design to meeting the needs of a particular group. Therefore, the recommended use of needs data is to complete a competency assessment of students to determine the amount and type of resources and effort needed to assist all students in achieving the expected level of proficiency.

(A more complete discussion of various needs assessment instruments and their uses can be found in Appendix A.)

**Criteria.** Needs data reveal whether

8.1. the assessed needs are expressed in results and are linked to the competencies, goals, and purpose.
8.2. the needs are student-based.
8.3. the needs identify gaps in desired results—i.e., discrepancy between "what is" and "what should be."

**9.0 Results Plans**

The plans completed by the counselors indicate how the results will be achieved. The plan contains the competency, criteria for success, the activities and resources, persons responsible for completion of tasks, and how the evaluation will be done.

**Criteria.** Results plans

9.1. are written by each counselor.

9.2. specify competencies, criteria for success, areas of responsibility, activities and their timetables, resources, means of evaluation, and data collection.

**10.0 Monitoring Students' Guidance Results**

Monitoring is the process of determining to what degree each student acquires the specified guidance competencies. A key element is communicating to the student and the parent the individual student's progress in attaining guidance-related goals. The process includes a responsible adult (counselor, teacher, parent, employer, etc.) who observes or measures competency demonstration and records verification on a form or student folder.

**Criteria.** In the monitoring process

10.1. counselors are accountable for all students.

10.2. there is an established method of monitoring and verifying students' progress in demonstrating guidance competencies.

10.3. there is an established means to record the progress, such as:

individual vocational/career educational plan
educational and career planning folder
guidance report card

10.4. activities are delineated by grade level.

**11.0 Advisory Council**

An advisory council is a group of persons representative of those groups affected by the guidance program: parents, teachers, pupil personnel services staff, administration, local community groups and, when appropriate, students. The council's function is to audit guidance program results and recommend priorities to the appropriate administrative body.

**Criteria.** An advisory council

11.1. is appointed and has a published schedule of meetings and agenda items.

11.2. has an appropriate representative membership.

11.3. chair is held by someone other than an administrator or counselor.

11.4. has a purpose or plan of work that is agreed upon.

11.5. makes minutes of its meetings available for review.

**12.0 Master Calendar of Events**

A calendar of events is published to inform students, teachers, parents, and administrators of activities. The calendar makes the program and the counselors' contributions more visible to the school, the district, and the community. The publication of monthly and yearly guidance calendars allows others—principals, parent-teacher organizations, church groups, and family-oriented community groups—to include guidance activities on their lists of events.

**Criteria.** The calendar

12.1. is published.
12.2. contains events that are identified by grade, month, and activity.
12.3. indicates date, time, purpose, and location of all events.
12.4. is distributed to appropriate, interested individuals and groups.

- **Glossary**

The glossary clearly defines all terms used in the description of the program. The glossary employs precise, clear language to ensure that team members, administrators, students, parents, and community members understand all aspects of the program.

**Criteria.** The glossary

a. clearly articulates the program to students, parents, staff, administrators, and the community.
b. is written at a basic reading level and has been tested for clarity to facilitate a clear understanding of the total program.

The results-based guidance program, a system of interrelated and interdependent elements, is in accord with the school district's philosophy, curriculum, and other programs. Figure 1 shows the interrelationship of elements in a results-based system.

- **Program Evaluation**

In a results-based guidance program three types of results are evaluated. Although evaluation is listed as the last element of the results-based guidance system, it is integral to the entire program. The data flow system included in the management system enables counselors and teachers to evaluate results or competencies immediately after a guidance activity has been completed.

Intermediate evaluation, which occurs when the student is ready to graduate from the school, measures a group of competencies acquired throughout the schooling process. Intermediate evaluation assesses the student's level of goal attainment.

The aim of long-range evaluation is to determine the extent to which the student's preparation during elementary, middle, and high school has provided the competencies necessary to succeed in a range of post-high school endeavors—educational, occupational, social, and personal. Obviously this level of evaluation occurs after the students have left school and had an opportunity to try their skills in the adult world. Three-, five-, and ten-year follow-up studies are the most common intervals for collection of these evaluation data.

**Criteria.** In program evaluation

a. competencies are assessed and reported on an ongoing basis.
b. goal evaluation is completed and reported.
c. a systematic follow-up data collection system is implemented and findings are reported.
d. findings are used to improve programs.
e. data and recommendations are reported to the administration, board of education, and advisory council.

Although results-based guidance programs share with the other models presented in this *Guide* an emphasis on student results as the primary purpose of guidance, there are differences between the models.

One difference between the two models presented in this *Guide* is the method of achieving the agreed-upon results. In the results-based model presented in this chapter, the strategies to achieve results are chosen by the counselor and administrator at the school. Although there is an implied curriculum, it consists only of a delineation of competencies that students are to gain. This gives counselors and program managers the freedom to create strategies that match their unique expertise, interests, resources, and populations. That the results are to be attained, assessed, and reported is not negotiable; how students acquire those results is determined by the people operating the program.

Another major difference between this results-based guidance model and other models that focus on results (see Chapter 3) is the importance of ongoing and periodic data collection. Evaluation data is used consistently by counselors to make indicated changes in plans. Intermediate and long-range evaluation findings are used to alter the total program as necessary. Collection and analysis of data is an integral part of each counselor's planning process.

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CHAPTER
THREE

# Guidance Program Evaluation: The Program Audit

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After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- define when a guidance program meets the basic criteria of a **program**
- identify basic elements of a sample guidance program.
- identify and use identified standards to perform a program audit.
- analyze time and task distribution within a guidance program.
- differentiate and explain the difference between processes (means) and results.

Guidance program evaluation examines the readiness of a program for results evaluation. Before the results of a guidance program can be evaluated, it is first necessary to ascertain that a program exists and is in place. This chapter examines the readiness of a program for results evaluation by focusing on three questions:

1. When is a program a program?
2. What are the basic elements of a program?
3. Are the basic elements of the program in place?

Only after these questions are answered can the results of a program be identified.

## *When Is a Guidance Program a Guidance Program?*

This question assumes that *program* can be defined and that guidance *is* a program. As with other programs in education, a guidance program must have content and structure and include the following:

- desired results (competencies)
- activities to assist students to achieve these results
- professionally recognized and certified personnel
- resources (Gysbers and Henderson, 1988, 30)

If guidance is not understood and implemented as a program—if it is seen instead as an ancillary service, loosely organized around broad role and function statements—then it cannot be evaluated as a program. Thus, establishing the concept of guidance as a program is the first step in the process of program evaluation.

The following generally accepted characteristics of a program will help answer the question: "When is a guidance program a guidance program?"

1. *Programs are comprehensive and developmental.* They are developmental in that guidance activities are conducted on a continuing and planned basis. While immediate and crisis needs of students must be met, a major focus of developmental programs is on systematically providing students with experiences throughout their schooling to help them gain competencies to meet their personal, social, educational, and career needs. Guidance programs are comprehensive in that a full range of activities and services is provided including assessment, information, counseling, consultation, referral, placement, follow-up, and evaluation.
2. *Programs focus on students' competencies, not just on their deficiencies.* To some a major focus in guidance is the problems students have and the obstacles they may face. Addressing deficiencies is important, but should not dominate. If it is emphasized in isolation, attention is often focused on what is wrong with students, not what is right. Obviously, problems and obstacles need to be identified and remedied, but they should not overshadow the existing or potential competencies of students. A major emphasis of a guidance program is to help students develop guidance related competencies by building on the competencies they already have.

3. *Programs mandate collaboration.* A developmental guidance program is based on the assumption that counselors, teachers, parents, and administrators are involved in supporting and carrying out the guidance program. At the same time, it is understood that certified counselors are central to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program. They provide direct services to individuals and work in consultative relationships with other members of the guidance team.
4. *Programs mandate articulation.* A basic assumption of comprehensive guidance programs is program continuity—i.e. content and programmatic linkages across all grade levels K-12. This means that the guidance staff across all levels meet on a regular basis to exchange information and to update programs as new programs and student needs are identified (Drier and Gysbers, 1989).
5. *Programs can be evaluated.* Programs have identifiable and quantifiable structure, processes, activities, content, and resources.

## Basic Elements of a Guidance Program

To be complete, comprehensive guidance programs K-12 require three basic elements: (1) structure, processes, and activities, (2) content, and (3) resources.

**Structure, Processes, and Activities**

A guidance program needs structure so that it can function in an organized way. The structure and processes below were used in the program model first described by Gysbers and Moore (1974, 1981) and later by Gysbers and Henderson (1988). This model is used to illustrate the interrelationship of program structure, activities, and processes.

Structural Components

*Definition.* The program definition includes the mission statement of the guidance program and emphasizes the centrality of the guidance program within the school district's total educational program. It delineates and emphasizes the competencies students will possess as a result of their involvement in the program. It summarizes the components of the program.

*Rationale.* The rationale discusses the importance of guidance as an integral but identifiable part of the educational system and provides reasons why students in our society need to acquire the competencies that will result from their involvement in a comprehensive guidance program. It includes implications drawn from the student and community needs assessments or other clarifications of goals for the local educational system.

*Assumptions.* Assumptions are the principles that shape and guide the program. They may include statements regarding the essence of the contribution that school counselors working in guidance programs make to students' development, the premises that undergird the comprehensiveness and the balanced nature of the program, and the relationship between the guidance program and the other educational programs. A statement that the program needs to be continuously planned, designed, implemented, and evaluated should be included as well. (In Chapter 2 these are referred to as "we agree" philosophy statements.)

Program Components

*Guidance curriculum.* The guidance curriculum (content and instruction) is the center of the developmental part of a comprehensive guidance program. It contains statements regarding the goals for guidance learning activities and the competencies to be achieved by students. The curriculum is organized by grade level; that is, a scope and sequence of learnings for grades K-12 is established. It is designed to serve all students and is often called classroom or group guidance.

- Sample processes:
  - large group presentations such as career nights or class meetings
  - classroom presentations
  - small group presentations

*Individual planning.* The activities of the individual planning components are designed for all students and are intended to assist them in the development and implementation of their personal-social, educational, and career plans. These activities are designed to help students understand and monitor their growth and development and take action on their next steps educationally or vocationally. The activities in this component are generally delivered individually, but sometimes small groups are used.

- Sample processes:
  - advisement
  - assessment
  - placement

*Responsive services.* The purpose of this component is to provide special help to students who are facing problems that interfere with their healthy personal-social, career, or educational development. It includes the provision of preventive responses to students who are on the brink of choosing an unhealthy or inappropriate solution to their problems or who are unable to cope with a situation. Remedial interventions also are provided for students who have already made unwise choices or have not coped well with problem situations.

- Sample processes:
  - individual counseling
  - small group counseling
  - consultation
  - referrals

*System support.* This component has two parts: (1) activities necessary to support the other three components and (2) activities implemented by guidance staff that support other educational programs. Support that the guidance staff provides to other programs includes *(a)* the system related aspects of the individual planning activities (e.g., student course selection), *(b)* linkage with other instructional areas such as special education, vocational education, English, social studies, and mathematics programs, and *(c)* guidance-related administrative assignments.

- Sample processes:
  - program management
  - consultation
  - community outreach
  - public relations
  - professional development

**Content**

Traditionally, guidance has been conceptualized and implemented as a support service lacking a content base of its own (Aubrey, 1973). Springhall (1971) made this point when he stated that guidance textbooks usually avoid discussion of a subject-matter base for guidance programs. Today, however, it is common to talk about comprehensive guidance programs as an integral part of education with their own content.

One major feature of these programs is a focus on student outcomes (competencies); students' achievement of these outcomes is the responsibility of the counselors and other student support personnel. Knowledge and skills to be learned by individuals as a result of the program are variously grouped by different writers as *(a)* personal, social, career, and educational, *(b)* knowledge of self and others, career planning and exploration, and educational and vocational development, or *(c)* learning, personal/social, and career/vocational. These categories identify domain or content areas of human growth and development from which student competencies are drawn. Guidance activities and resources designed to assist students to achieve these competencies are organized accordingly.

**Resources**

Early in this chapter it was noted that guidance is a program like other programs in the school. Like other programs, a guidance program must have resources to operate. Gysbers and Henderson (1988) categorized these guidance program resources as human, financial, and political.

Human Resources

Human resources, the personnel who are involved in the program, include professional counselors, teachers, administrators, parents, students, and members of the community. Professional school counselors are central to the program and provide a variety of services directly to students. They collaborate with teachers and consult with teachers, parents, and administrators. They are accountable for the program's operation and results. They conduct program evaluations and evaluate the results of the program.

Financial Resources

Financial resources include the following:

1. Budget—money for personnel, resources, professional development, and the like
2. Material—educational, occupational, and personal-social information (all types of media) used to deliver guidance results
3. Equipment—machines, computers, and other equipment used to deliver the guidance results
4. Facilities—space of sufficient size, appropriately located and organized to deliver the programs

Political Resources

Political resources are defined as "the support that is rooted in disrict or building policies, in state and federal laws, rules, or regulations, or in the standards adopted by accreditation or other professional associations to which your school or district subscribes" (Gysbers and Henderson, 1988, 102). Of particular importance are local school board policies that describe and endorse the nature and structure of the program, provide support for the program, and provide the time to carry out the program. Also important are any state regulations that establish personnel ratios and program standards.

Summary

What are the basic elements of a guidance program? This chapter has suggested there are three basic elements: (1) structure, processes, and activities, (2) content, and (3) resources. Figure 1 presents these elements in summary form.

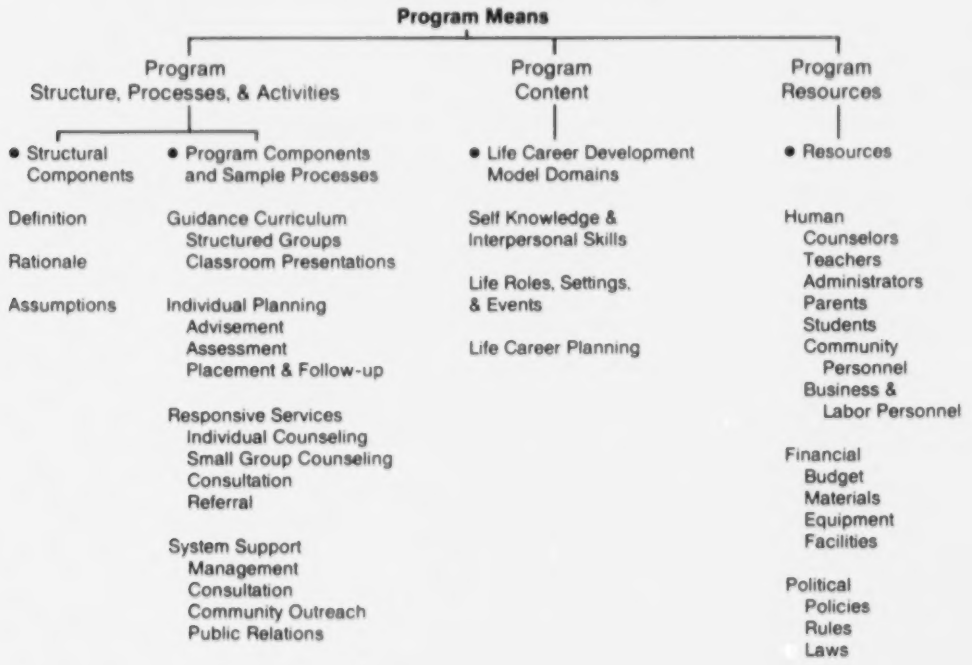


**Figure 3.1**
**Basic Elements of a Sample Guidance Program**

## *Are the Basic Elements of the Program in Place?*

Once decisions have been made about the basic elements of a program, the next step is a program audit to establish the degree to which these elements are in place and operating. The three elements described previously, when used as program standards, illustrate how this step is implemented. In addition, the appropriate use of professional counselors' time is crucial to the successful implementation and operation of a guidance program.

### Program Audit Using Standards

The use of standards is one way to see the degree to which the program elements are in place and operating. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "standards" is used to mean the basic elements and subelements of the program. To illustrate the use of this procedure, the three basic elements—structure and processes, content, and resources—are defined as the standards of a guidance program. Once these example standards are selected, the degree to which they are in place and operating can then be measured using a five-point scale: 1=not implemented, 2=weakly implemented, 3=moderately implemented, 4=strongly implemented, and 5=fully implemented. When a standard does not apply, "NA" (not applicable) is used.

In Figures 3.2 and 3.3 on the following pages are some selected example standards grouped under two of the three basic elements and subelements of the program. For an actual audit, all of the elements and subelements would need to be fully addressed. The number of standards used in the program audit will vary depending upon the nature, scope, and number of elements or subelements in the program. The selected standards listed under the four program components are from Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas (Gysbers and Henderson, 1988, 265-267).

### Time and Task Analysis

A major part of any guidance program audit involves answering two questions: "How much time are counselors spending carrying out program tasks?" and "How is that time distributed?" If counselors are not spending their time carrying out the agreed upon program and their time is not distributed across the program components, the program is not functioning appropriately. In some districts, counselors may be spending from 20 to 40 percent of their time on activities that are not part of the program. If this is the case, the program is not in full operation because the key persons in the program—the counselors—are not always available. Also, in other districts, all of the counselors may be spending an inordinate amount of time on one part of the program (or with one element of the population) at the expense of the other part of the program. This may not be an effective use of time.

## Structural Components

### Definition

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. There is a written definition for the guidance program. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. There is a list of assumptions. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## Program Components

### Guidance Curriculum

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. All students are assisted in a systematic way to develop knowledge, understanding, and skills identified as necessary to enhance their personal, social, career, and educational development. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Developmentally appropriate student outcomes are specified for each grade level. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Outcome selection is based on an assessment of student needs for guidance instruction. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The guidance curriculum is taught to class-sized groups of students. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### Individual Planning

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. *All* students are provided information and are assisted in applying the skills necessary to make plans and to take the next appropriate steps toward their established goals. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The priority for the component, as indicated by the time spent by most counselor(s) and the activities provided, is to assist students to complete successfully their elementary/middle/high school education. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Individual planning activities are preceded by pertinent guidance instruction. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### Responsive Services

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Students in need are assisted in solving immediate problems that interfere with their healthy personal, social, career, and/or educational development. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. A balance of service is maintained for students with preventive and remedial level needs. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. There is a systematic provision of responsive services as follows: | | | | | | |
| a. group counseling | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. individual counseling | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. staff consultation | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. parent consultation | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. referral to other specialists | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### System Support

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Communication mechanisms are established which facilitate collaboration between the guidance department and administration. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Communication mechanisms are established which facilitate collaboration between the guidance department and the instructional departments. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Counselor(s) is/are encouraged to utilize professional growth opportunities. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Figure 3.2**
**Example Standards for the**
**Element Program Structure and Processes**

**Financial Resources**

**Budget**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. A reasonable budget is appropriated to the guidance department by administration. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Materials and Equipment**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The equipment available for conducting individual planning activities is adequate. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. The materials available to support implementation of the individual planning activities are effective. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. The equipment available for conducting responsive services is adequate. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. The materials available to support implementation of the responsive service activities are effective. | NA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Figure 3.3**
**Example Standards for the Element Program Resources**

As one example of how to check counselors' use of time, the Missouri Comprehensive Program Model (Starr and Gysbers, 1988) recommends that counselors complete the Time and Task Analysis Form (Starr and Gysbers, 1988, 93; see Figure 3.4). The form is used to survey the amount and distribution of counselors' time prior to the implementation of a comprehensive program. Because of the need to provide a baseline from which to plan the desired comprehensive program, the survey is done prior to implementation. Note that the form uses few program components—guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. Note also that the inclusion of the last column—*nonguidance activities*—assumes that many counselors currently are spending time doing activities that are not part of the guidance program. It is important that these tasks also be identified and the time it takes to do them calculated.

It is recommended that the form be filled out one day of each week for the full school year. Monday might be selected as form completion day for the first week of school, Tuesday the next week, Wednesday the next, and so on. Percentages of time would be calculated for the full school year for each category, and the resulting data would be presented for all counselors in a building or for all counselors in the district at all levels.

| Categories | Curriculum | Individual Planning | Responsive Services | System Support | Nonguidance Activities |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Examples of Activities | Classroom Activities, Group Activities | Individual Advisement, Individual Assessment, Placement, Vocational/ Occupational Exploration | Consultation, Personal Counseling, Small Groups, Individual Counseling, Crisis Counseling, Referral | Research, Staff/ Community Development, Professional Development, Committee/ Advisory Boards, Program Management/ Operation | Bus Duty, Lunchroom Duty, Playground Duty, Balancing Class Sizes, Building Master Schedule, Substitute Teaching, Figuring GPA's, Figuring Class Rank |
| 7:00 - 7:30 | | | | | |
| 7:30 - 8:00 | | | | | |
| 8:00 - 8:30 | | | | | |
| 8:30 - 9:00 | | | | | |
| 9:00 - 9:30 | | | | | |
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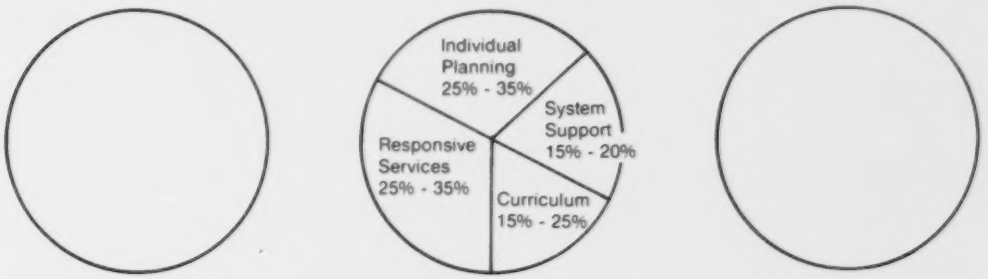
| 12:30 - 1:00 | | | | | |
| 1:00 - 1:30 | | | | | |
| 1:30 - 2:00 | | | | | |
| 2:00 - 2:30 | | | | | |

**Figure 3.4**
**Time and Task Analysis Form**
**30 Minute Intervals**

Using the sample high school form from the Missouri Model, Figure 3.5 (Starr and Gysbers, 1988, 103) displays data from the analysis. Note the circle on the left should display the data from the Time and Task Analysis Form for the current program. In the center, recommended percentages are presented. Note also that the percentage of time suggested for nonguidance activities is zero. This means that when the full program goes into effect (see the circle on the right in Figure 3.5), all of the counselor's time would be devoted to the guidance program. When this happens, it becomes a one hundred percent program.



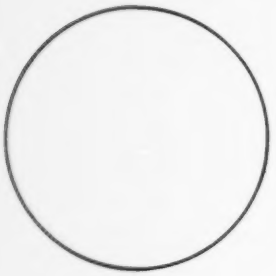

**Current District Program Percentages**
_____ guidance curriculum
_____ individual planning
_____ responsive service
_____ system support
_____ nonguidance

**Suggested Percentages**
15% - 25% guidance curriculum
25% - 35% individual planning
25% - 35% responsive services
15% - 20% system support
0% nonguidance

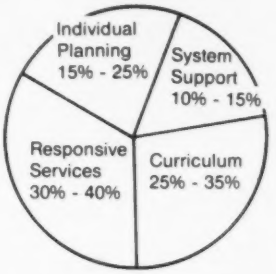
**Desired District Program Percentages**
_____ guidance curriculum
_____ individual planning
_____ responsive service
_____ system support

**Figure 3.5**
**Time Distribution Form**
**High School Level**

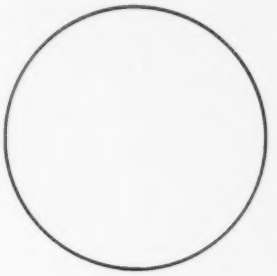
In the circle on the right a school district would decide on and then display the percentages of the time it feels should be allocated to the four program components, based on district needs and goals. Each building in the district would then determine the percentage of time needed for that building. Buildings throughout the district could vary in percentages of time, as could the percentages of time for individual counselors in a particular building. Figures 3.6 and 3.7 display similar forms for middle school/junior high and elementary levels.



**Current District Program Percentages**
_____ guidance curriculum
_____ individual planning
_____ responsive service
_____ system support
_____ nonguidance



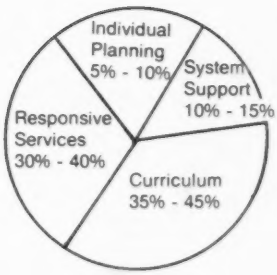

**Suggested Percentages**
25% - 35% guidance curriculum
15% - 25% individual planning
30% - 40% responsive services
10% - 15% system support
0% nonguidance



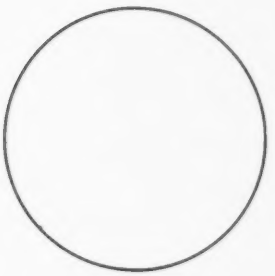
**Desired District Program Percentages**
_____ guidance curriculum
_____ individual planning
_____ responsive service
_____ system support

**Figure 3.6**
**Time Distribution Form**
**Middle School/Junior High Level**

**Current District Program Percentages**
_____ guidance curriculum
_____ individual planning
_____ responsive service
_____ system support
_____ nonguidance




**Suggested Percentages**
35% - 45% guidance curriculum
5% - 10% individual planning
30% - 40% responsive services
10% - 15% system support
0% nonguidance



**Desired District Program Percentages**
_____ guidance curriculum
_____ individual planning
_____ responsive service
_____ system support

**Figure 3.7**
**Time Distribution Form**
**Elementary Level**

The Time and Task Analysis Form is filled out only once in the entire implementation process. The reason for this is that once the program is up and running, the calendars counselors maintain are used to calculate their time. In the Missouri Model, it is recommended that counselors maintain two week calendars. At the end of each two week period, counselors review their calendars, assign the activities to one of the four program components, and then calculate the percentages of time they spent in each.

## A Final Note

The structure of a guidance program helps to systematically organize the guidance and counseling processes used to achieve the results of the program. Content identifies the student competencies to be attained in the program. Resources specify the necessary personnel, money, material, equipment, facilities, policies, and support required to carry out the program. These elements represent the requisite *means* of a program, without which it is impossible to fully evaluate the *results* of a program.

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CHAPTER

FOUR

# Assessing Results

C. D. Johnson, Johnson and Associates

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- give examples of the connections between a program's purpose or mission and the purpose or mission of the school district.
- define four kinds of results and describe how to establish criteria for each.
- identify three ways to collect data.
- give examples of a total results plan that includes a sample competency, what is to be learned by the student, who is accountable for ensuring that the competency is achieved, when it will be accomplished, what criteria will be used to demonstrate successful completion, and how the data will be collected.
- list examples of program goals and the criteria used to determine success.
- identify potential unplanned-for results (impact results) and how the data can be collected.
- identify evaluation strategies for long-range results.
- differentiate between the kinds of results for which counselors are responsible and unplanned-for results for which counselors are not accountable.

In this chapter the assessment of three kinds or levels of student results is discussed: immediate results of a specific process, terminal (intermediate) results when a student graduates from the system, and long-range results, three to five years after leaving the system. Also included is how to determine the means of evaluation and the criteria for success. In addition, examples of unplanned-for results are provided along with ways to determine the impact of the program on parents and staff. An explanation and example of how to demonstrate connections between the purpose statements of the district board of education and the guidance program are included.

In Chapters 2 and 3, guidelines were provided to determine if a program is results based. Each of the models provided specific elements, the definitions of each, and criteria to use in auditing a program to determine if it is ready for evaluation. Results-based models have certain aspects in common: (1) each has specified student outcomes, competencies, and/or goals, (2) each has specified means and allocated resources to achieve the results, and (3) each indicates connection between the program elements as well as between the statements of purpose, philosophy, and goals of the board of education and of the student support or guidance program.

## *Linkages*

All programs within a school district are legitimized through the formal statements of purpose and goals developed by the board of education. It is the intentionality of these statements that provides a framework within which all school system elements of curricula, management, pupil support programs, and specific services operate. Because the guidance program is one element of the educational system, it must show connections to the district's board-adopted purpose and beliefs and to each school's purpose, mission, and beliefs.

An example is provided below to show direct connections or linkages that help in deciding what evaluation data are to be collected and reported, and are important in budget considerations.

**Statement of Purpose**
The Board of Education of AAA School District is committed to having all students acquire the education needed to become autonomous and contributing citizens in the democratic society in which we live.

Level 3 Results: Purpose/Long-range Impact

The guidance program of AAA School District is committed to having all students acquire competencies in learning, working, and relating to others in order to be productive and contributing members of our democratic society.

Level 2 Results: Goals

All students will acquire and demonstrate competencies (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) in studying, taking standardized and teacher-made tests, educational planning, and using available resources. (This is one goal within a total program. Most programs will have three or four goals, e.g., educational, career, personal/social.)

Level 1 Results: Competency/Outcome

Each student in grade _____ will demonstrate:

- knowledge of her/his learning style
- skills in taking lecture notes
- etc. . . .

(These are sample competencies that could be included within the educational goals cited above. Each goal is defined by knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies for each grade level.)

## *Assessing Results*

Results are "consequences of applying resources and processes" (Kaufman, 1988). The organizational elements model (Kaufman, 1988) provides a paradigm that can be used as an organizer for terminology associated with evaluation (see Chapter 1, Figure 1.1). There are four kinds of results: (1) long-range results defined in the program purpose and mission statements, (2) goals or intermediate/terminal results, (3) competency or immediate results, and (4) the unplanned-for results caused by any of the previous three.

1. **Long-range results.** The long-range results, as defined in the purpose and mission statements, refer to the intentionality of the program. These broad statements specify how the program should affect students' actions one, three, five, and ten years after graduation. Long-range results occur as the consequence of all of the student's educational experiences both within the system and after leaving the system. The purpose of evaluating the long-range results is to determine if the guidance related competencies have been used by the student to reach the desired intention of the program.
2. **Goals or intermediate results.** The content of the goals or intermediate student results specifies in general terms what all students are expected to do because of the guidance program upon graduation from school. For example, upon completion of high school, students have demonstrated skills in using self-characteristics, career/occupational information, and educational skills in selecting a career or educational program leading to a career. Other examples include all students having skills in preparing resumes, interviewing for work, and knowing where to locate educational opportunities.

3. **Competencies, outcomes, immediate results.** These are the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students acquire as a result of participating in a guidance activity. These results are assessed during and/or immediately upon completion of an activity. For example, when the student completes a group guidance activity on how to prepare for a test, the counselor immediately assesses the student's knowledge and skills in that area.
4. **Impact or unplanned-for results.** Unplanned-for results or impact results are those that occur as a consequence of a planned, implemented, and evaluated results-based program. For example, if all students in a given grade have demonstrated skills in taking standardized tests, mean test scores may rise. When all students acquire skills in solving personal problems, there may be fewer referrals. When students acquire skills in educational planning, there may be a reduction in failures. When teachers acquire different classroom management skills, there may be fewer discipline referrals to the administration. As a result of a peer helpers program in grades K-12, the schools might have fewer dropouts.

It is important for counselors and administrators to agree, however, that counselors are accountable only for predetermined immediate and intermediate results, not for unplanned-for results. For example, counselors can be accountable for all students demonstrating study skills that match their assessed learning styles, but they will not be held responsible for producing a rise in students' grades, achievement scores, or homework completed because other variables intervene, such as classroom teachers' inputs, home conditions, peer pressures, etc. Counselors can be held accountable for all students having skills in educational planning, but they are not accountable for students failing to meet classroom achievement standards.

The who, when, what, and how of evaluation is presented in Chapter 1. It is important that the counselor and administrator of guidance or student support programs agree on who is accountable for which results.

## *Establishing Criteria*

Criteria are the evidence used to determine that the students acquire the designated knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Although the criteria for different kinds of results (immediate, intermediate, and long-range) may vary, all must show linkages with the others. That is, the criteria of immediate results should link with the intermediate or goal results, which in turn link with the desired long-range behaviors, such as becoming self-supporting, becoming a lifelong learner, adapting to societal changes, and being an active citizen by voting and contributing to the community.

For example, the consequence of identifying options for post-high school endeavors (an immediate result or competency) may lead the student (along with a number of other immediate results) to develop a post-high school plan and take the first steps of application (intermediate result or goal). The criterion is that the student be able to demonstrate planning and application skills. The long-range result would be that the student enter and complete advanced training and use the skills to become a competent, contributing adult in his/her field of choice.

## Collecting Data

There are three ways to collect data: (1) students write something, (2) students talk about something, and (3) students demonstrate behaviors that can be observed. The means of collecting information are frequently determined by the process of activity used to teach the competency.

1. **Students write.** Students can be asked to take a test, complete a worksheet, or simply list specific content requested. The written assessment can be as simple as one or two items, such as (1) listing the five steps in making a career decision or (2) identifying six sources of assistance available for a student with personal problems. Answers can be geared to machine scoring, or may be teacher validated through a classroom quiz.
2. **Students talk about something.** Students might be requested in classroom discussions, in small groups, or in individual conferences to describe or discuss specific content. For example, teachers, counselors, or peer helpers might request students to describe the steps to apply for work, to apply for financial assistance, to access help for personal problems, or to describe how they study based on their (assessed) learning style. Their answers validate their knowledge acquisition.
3. **Observe student behaviors.** Students can be observed using skills or knowledge or demonstrating attitudes that have resulted from a guidance program activity. These observations can be made by counselors, teachers, parents, or any other responsible adult. Examples include observing students using resources in the career center, joining new social groups, being more active in classroom discussions, being friendly with others, or becoming involved in community activities.

The three means of validating students' acquisition of predetermined guidance competencies or outcomes requires planning by counselors, as well as a trusting participatory relationship with school administrators.

## *Putting It All Together*

Examples of how to validate the three levels of results for different populations are presented below. Each example includes the desired results, what is to be learned, who is accountable, when it will be completed, the established criteria, and how the desired behavior will be validated.

### Immediate Results/Competencies

| | Competency | What | Who | When | Criteria | How |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A** | Ninth grade students will demonstrate skills in using sources of career information. | Uses a minimum of four resources to locate the following elements for a career of choice: education requirements, physical requirements, local availability, pay, advancement possibilities | Counselor | End of unit in career planning in a ninth grade English class | • Uses four resources<br>• Identifies at least one career choice<br>• Includes four of the following five from each resource: educational requirements, physical requirements, local availability, pay, advancement possibilities | Student completes a career research paper listing criteria and references and is validated as correct by the career center technician or counselor. |
| **B** | Eighth grade students will demonstrate skills in taking standardized tests. | • Follows instructions<br>• Paces | Counselor | End of practice unit and during test taking | • Completes information section correctly<br>• Begins and ends on time<br>• Makes erasures correctly<br>• Completes all sections on practice test | Counselor and teacher observe students during sample testing session and during testing. |
| **C** | Ninth grade students will demonstrate skills in listening to others. | Reflects feelings and clarifies content | Counselor | During unit on listening when using videotape | • Correctly reflects feelings at a level 3 or better on the Carkhuff Scale<br>• Reflects content and provides feedback a minimum of four times | Counselor validates by observing students during activities and by viewing students on videotape. |
| **D** | Third grade students will identify how others contribute to them. | • Parents take care of them.<br>• Teachers help them learn.<br>• Peers play with them.<br>• Policemen protect them.<br>• Musicians provide entertainment. | Counselor | At the end of an activity on "Belonging" | • List correctly at least one contribution of each of five persons contributing to the student according to the master list in "Belonging" materials | Counselor will validate that student correctly completed the worksheet. |

**Potential impact or unplanned-for results as a consequence of A-D above:**

A. Fewer program changes in grade 10. Increased enrollment in vocational courses. Decrease in failures.

B. Improvement in test scores. Fewer errors on test directions. Fewer students absent on testing day.

C. Fewer referrals for interpersonal conflict with other students and/or teachers. Better or improved school climate. Fewer suicide attempts. More self-referrals to guidance. Fewer students being alone during the school day.

D. Fewer conflicts between students. More/better self-esteem. Increase in parent involvement.

## *Intermediate Results or Goal Evaluation*

Intermediate results are usually evaluated during the students' senior year, the last year in a specific program, or at the end of a project. These data will be collected from twelfth graders, eighth graders for middle school, or fifth graders for elementary school, students completing two years at a community college, students finishing a trade or technical course, or students participating in a special program.

The following provides examples of what is evaluated, the criteria of success, who will collect the data, when it will be collected, and some ideas on how it can be collected. Data on all goals can be collected at the same time, or separate strategies can be used for specific needs.

**A. Educational Goal.** Example:
All students will acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills in studying, taking standardized and teacher-made tests, using resources, and developing an individual educational plan.

Criteria
Study skills: Knows own learning style in terms of physical environment, time of day preference, organizational preference, with or without peer or adult present. Has a study plan based on learning style, including preparation, organization, place, time, etc.

Test-taking skills: Follows directions, paces, controls stress, prepares (sleep and nutrition).

Resources: Demonstrates knowledge and use of guidance materials such as the *Occupational Outlook Handbook,* computerized college and career data bank, college catalogs, and financial aid information. Can identify educational resources used during high school career and resources available after leaving high school.

Planning: Determines own goals, identifies steps to reach goals, evaluates current and potential progress, identifies constraints, makes corrections as required.

**B. Career goal.** Example:
All students will acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills in planning and preparing for a career that relates to their career goals and assessed aptitudes and interests.

Criteria
Self-characteristics: Knows own academic, work, and interpersonal aptitudes, interests, environmental preferences, work styles, and work values.

World of work: Knows and uses career information sources. Identifies careers that match his/her self-characteristics and is aware of projected future for the specific career fields of interest.

Career decision making and planning: Has used self-characteristics data and world-of-work information to select potential career fields, knows educational and training requirements to enter identified careers, and has completed a written plan that outlines decisions and consequences necessary to achieve the career goals.

Finding, keeping, changing employment: Has completed a current resume that includes work skills, work chronology, career goals, and references. Demonstrates appropriate job interview skills. Knows on-the-job work skills necessary to maintain employment and those necessary to advance; knows appropriate etiquette in leaving employment.

**Personal/social goal.** Example:
All students will acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills in interpersonal relationships and in recognizing the contributions of self and others.

Criteria
Interpersonal relationships: Demonstrates listening skills; knows own communication style, strengths, and weaknesses; knows resources available for help with personal problems; demonstrates conflict resolution skills through listening, giving feedback, resolution of differences.

Recognizing contributions: Demonstrates a sense of belonging to more than one group; identifies own contributions with others and others' contributions with him/herself; knows what the different religious, racial, and cultural groups contribute to society; and demonstrates knowledge of the importance of having and being a mentor.

**Potential impact or unplanned-for results as a consequence of A-C above:**

A. Learning to learn (educational goal): Increase in graduation rate. Higher percentage of students planning to attend college or other post-high school educational program. Increase in test scores. Increase in school attendance. Increase in parent participation. Increase in positive school climate indicators.
B. Learning to work (career goal): Increase in enrollment in career-oriented/vocational courses. Decrease in program adjustments or changes. Increase in student employment.
C. Learning to relate (personal/social goal): Increase of student involvement in school related activities. Decrease in referrals for interpersonal conflicts. Increase in self and other referrals to counselors for personal problems. Decrease in suicide attempts.

**Who:** Counselors, teachers, administrators, central office personnel, parent volunteers, consultants, members of the Guidance Advisory Council, employers, community agency volunteers.

**When:** During the senior year, preferably late winter or early spring.

**How:** Sample strategies:

1. Develop and use a structured interview to collect the desired data. During the interview the student's resume or educational/career folder with evidence of goal attainment should be available; e.g., student resume, college acceptance letter, etc. (If the number of students is large, use of a sampling method is recommended.)
2. The parents/guardians of students interviewed can be contacted by phone, in person, or by mail and asked the same questions the students were asked. This allows for additional validation of the results, as well as determining if the parents know what guidance competencies their children have acquired.
3. Another means of collecting data is to have students complete an information form or survey that requests evidence or demonstration of the skills they have acquired. For example, employment in a summer job is evidence of job-finding skills; acceptance to a college of one's choice is evidence of planning and application skills; a grade point average commensurate with student's ability is evidence of appropriate learning skills.
4. Teachers can also validate that students have demonstrated the outcomes or competencies during class-related activities.
5. During the spring semester of the senior year, the evaluator(s) (counselor, teacher) will interview a sample of students in groups of two to six during which time students will demonstrate personal/social skills, e.g., listening, resolving conflicts, verbally identifying the contributions of self and others.

**Long-range, Purpose, Follow-through Evaluation**

Long-range evaluation is conducted to determine if the program purposes have been achieved. To do this, it is necessary to conduct follow-up data collection. This can be done on a one-, three-, five-, ten-year, or other timeline configuration established by the person or persons in charge. The data to be collected should be linked directly to the content or intentions of the program's statement of purpose. In the follow-up, the kinds of information requested will probably vary by year, i.e., year one information will differ from year five information, which will differ from year ten information.

Example

**Purpose:** The guidance program is designed to ensure that all students acquire the insights and knowledge they require to become autonomous, mature members of the adult society in our democratic nation. This knowledge is enhanced by students' acquiring transfer skills in learning, working, relating to others, and using leisure time constructively.

**What:** Transfer skills in learning, working, relating, and leisure to become autonomous adults.

Year 1
- When you graduated from high school, you indicated you were planning to go to (work/school). What are you doing currently? (Working full/part-time, school full/part-time, nothing, military service, married. . .)
- The guidance program was designed to help you acquire skills in studying and finding employment. Do you have skills in studying? Yes____ No____ If yes, give examples of when/how you have successfully used your study skills. If no, what would you recommend school personnel do to help students?
- Do you know how to find employment? Yes____ No____ Give examples of how you have demonstrated this skill.
- What additional skills would you have liked to get in school?

**How:** The collection of information on graduates must be carefully planned in order to get adequate samples. Listed are some examples for consideration:

1. During the senior year or close to the end of the training program, identify a representative group of students. Meet with them individually or in small groups and solicit their support for participation in a follow-up data collection effort. Explain to them the reason for the activity and why they were selected. Include a handout on sample information and what they will be expected to do. Consideration should be given to supplying two or more addressed postcards for them to use when and if their address changes.
2. Some successful efforts of quality programs include:
   - A group of seniors conducts telephone interviews of former students.
   - A group of parent volunteers conducts telephone interviews.
   - Graduating seniors complete self-addressed envelopes. During the spring of the following year, mail the first year follow-up questions to them, including a stamped and addressed return envelope.
   - Vocational education programs collect follow-up information on their students. The forms can be used to include requests for information helpful in guidance program evaluation.
   - In many communities, local service organizations subsidize follow-up efforts by providing funds for hiring persons to help with mailing, telephoning, and data counting. They also furnish free printing, postage, and computer use.
   - Teachers are asked to call former students.
   - Efforts might cause the first, third, and/or other years' follow-up to be a classroom project for courses such as statistics, sociology, or psychology. The data and the collection processes are used to teach specific content to students.

Year 3
- When you graduated from high school, you indicated that you were planning to _____. What are you currently doing?
  _____
- What are your career plans?
  _____
- Do you know where to get assistance in finding (different) employment?
- Name those you have used. _____
- Do you know how to get assistance in finding additional training for your current or desired career or occupation? Yes ____ No ____
- How many different jobs have you had since you completed high school? ____ Please list them. _____
  _____
- Do you plan to change your career? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, to what?
  _____
- Do you plan to move to another city? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, we will send you a postcard to mail with your new address.
- Do you know how to prepare a resume? Yes ____ No ____
- Do you have a current resume? Yes ____ No ____
- Do you know where to find help for personal problems? Name some places. _____

Year 5
- Are you currently employed? Yes ____ No ____ Full- or part-time? _____
- If employed, what is your job title? _____
  How many hours per week do you work? _____
- If you are going to school, what is your major and when do you plan to graduate? Major _____ Completion date _____
  If you have graduated, when? _____
  Degree _____ Major _____
- What are some recommendations you can make to assist the guidance department to help its current students? _____
  _____

**How:** (See Year 1 above.)

Year 10
- Are you currently employed? Yes ____ No ____
  If yes, is your salary adequate to cover your current living costs? _____
- What is your current job title? _____
- Did you attend or are you attending a community college, four-year college/university, or trade/professional school? Yes ____ No ____
  If yes, please give the name of the school(s). _____
  _____
  If yes, did you graduate? Yes ____ No ____ How many years did you attend? _____ Are you currently attending? _____ Do you plan to continue your education? Yes ____ No ____

**How:** One of the ways to collect information for years 5 and 10 is during preparation for, during, or after a class reunion. There are always students who maintain a sense of belonging to a school or program and who keep track of where former graduates live for purposes of reunions. These individuals are a great source of assistance in data collection efforts.

**Who:** Accountability for follow-up efforts logically rests with central office personnel. However, many small school districts leave such efforts to school-based individuals such as counselors, current students, and parent volunteers.

**Potential impact or unplanned-for results as a consequence of follow-up efforts:**
More support for local schools including tax initiatives, involvement by former students in school-related activities, increase in volunteers, donations of money and resources.

## Summary

Results-based guidance programs are those that clearly define what students will learn, the skills they will acquire, and the attitudes they will develop. There are three kinds of results: (1) immediate, (2) intermediate, and (3) long-range. In addition, there are unplanned-for results that occur as a consequence of the guidance program, such as an increase in attendance, more parent involvement, fewer classroom teacher referrals, a rise in standardized test scores, or a more positive learning/school climate. Although it is important to collect and review each kind of result, it is most important that counselors and others understand that the guidance staff is accountable only for "planned-for" guidance program results.

## Reference

Kaufman, Roger (1988). *Planning educational systems: A results-based approach.* Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Co., Inc.

CHAPTER

FIVE

# Using Evaluation Results

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After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- identify two types of evaluation and purposes for each.
- identify three types of data used for evaluation.
- describe several sources and methods of measuring student results.
- list three uses of evaluation data.
- define how evaluation is used.
- describe decisions and actions to be taken based on four types of evaluation results.
- identify various audiences concerned with guidance evaluation findings.
- describe the key sections needed in an evaluation report.
- name strategies beyond the written report to present evaluation information to various audiences.

Recently, at a local school board meeting, two groups presented information to their board of education. Both were requesting an increase in staff.

The school district's guidance department presented its case, explaining that additional counselors would allow the guidance staff to see more students, provide additional activities such as career or college days, increase the testing program, do more individual counseling, and provide more group guidance activities. All of these activities, it was pointed out, were well received by students and the staff.

The second group, composed of teachers and curriculum specialists, although not mentioning whether students liked the instruction they were receiving, did note a recent decline in district achievement test scores and the fact that students were not achieving in relation to their potential. Class size, it was pointed out, prevented teachers from spending more time with underachievers and from providing extra time with gifted students or students experiencing learning difficulties. A lower pupil-teacher ratio would help increase achievement and reduce learning difficulties.

Both of these groups were asking for the same thing from the school board—an increase in staff. The counseling group based its request on the opportunity for counselors to do more for more students. The teachers' group based its request on an expected increase in pupil learning and achievement. Counselors assumed unstated results that would flow from their processes while the teachers stated outcomes that would flow from a somewhat undefined process. The board decided to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio and leave the counseling staff unchanged.

The scenario above, although oversimplified, describes an actual event and points out the need for competency-based results and their use in seeking to improve the effects of guidance programs in the schools.

Although the extent of the evaluation program in the above example is uncertain, evidence of both product and process evaluation seems to be presented. The counselors presented some evidence of satisfaction with their process but ignored any evidence of its effectiveness or effects. The teachers provided data that the effects of the present program (and ratio) were less than desirable and offered a somewhat untested process that would result in more desirable effects.

Both product (student results) and process evaluation are essential in any program. Both are necessary to prove the effects of the guidance program efforts and to improve the effectiveness of strategies, techniques, and resources.

Although both process and product evaluations are desired in every program, the preceding example shows that without effects data, the value of a program is based on assumptions, and any improvement, expansion, or change will be decided more on hope and charity than on faith that the program has desirable, tangible effects on learning and student development.

This chapter will deal with the purpose and use of both process and product evaluation data with a variety of audiences. It will address both use of evaluation to improve the current guidance program as well as to prove that the program does produce desirable effects for the specific target groups (students, parents, teachers) of the program.

## *Types of Evaluation*

In using the results of evaluation, both formative and summative data can be utilized. Formative evaluation data address the implementation processes and movement toward the attainment of results while the program is in progress. It is concerned with both what the program is doing and how it is being done. Ongoing program modifications are generally the result of formative evaluations.

Summative evaluation is concerned with the program's future. It addresses the levels of achievement of program goals, student/client result, and the success or failure of the program process.

Both formative and summative evaluations include product, process, and context data.

**Product data** focus on the outcomes, results, or products of the program. These data must be related to the program goals and objectives and are used to measure how well students/clients achieved the expected results.

**Process data** focus on the program activities and procedures. These data are used to determine the effectiveness and suitability of the program activities. Process data can be derived from answers to questions such as:

- Do the program activities deliver the expected competencies?
- Were activities conducted on schedule?
- Did each staff member carry out his/her responsibilities?
- Was there interprogram articulation?
- Did guidance personnel utilize staff development opportunities?

**Context or resource data** focus on the environment in which the program activities take place. Facilities, policies, organization, attitudes, budget, and administrative and staff support are examples of these data (California State Department of Education, 1981). Answers to the following types of questions can provide context data for the evaluation.

- Is there a designated, recognizable program leader?
- Is there time allotted for leadership functions?
- Which individuals have a role in staffing the program?
- Do counselors have the time and expertise required?
- What physical space is available? Is it at least adequate and private?
- Is the equipment adequate?
- Are materials adequate?
- Are supplies adequate?
- Is the budget adequate?
- Is the program equal in status to other programs?
- How is the program coordinated with other programs?
- Does the program include regular staff development opportunities?

The description of the types of evaluation and data serve to remind us that the uses made of evaluations vary with the reasons for the evaluation, the types of data collected, and the intended audience. Evaluation results are used for two purposes. The primary purpose is to improve the existing program to better achieve the desired/expected

results of that program. A second purpose, one that is becoming increasingly more popular as national and state committees continue to call for educational reform and accountability, is to prove that the guidance program does produce student/client competencies and long-range results. Both purposes must be included in the design of the evaluation program and the plan for the utilization of the results of the evaluation.

The Florida Department of Education (1989) outlined both product and process evaluation guides for its career development program. Many of these guidelines are applicable for all domains addressed in a guidance and counseling program. The Florida guidelines emphasized that the student competencies must address both the knowledge, attitudes, and skills of students and their application by the students. They point out that measuring student results is similar to measuring achievement in other areas of the school curriculum and that measurement can take many forms. The sources and methods of measuring student results could include:

- *Standardized Instruments.* These are catalogued and described in numerous professional publications. They must, of course, match the predetermined expected results.
- *State Assessment Programs.* Data collected in these programs may be directly related to the evaluation questions being asked by counselors.
- *Locally Developed Measures.* The staff can design measures for specific results.
- *Interviews.* Structured interviews can provide data about achievement levels and allow for further information.
- *Diaries and Journals.* Self-reporting logs can measure student activities, attitudes, and knowledge.
- *Checklists.* These are a convenient way to record behavior events and skills.
- *Observations.* Methods for recording observations can range from systematic observation instruments to audio or videotaping.
- *Simulations.* Simulated situations can be used to provide a stimulus for assessment items that measure students' understanding.
- *Role Playing Situations.* These can provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate behaviors.
- *Planning Forms.* A variety of forms can allow students to describe their plans or decision-making results.

In addressing process evaluation, the Florida guidelines suggested that the following questions be answered by the evaluation:

- Were the activities (program) fully implemented according to schedule?
- Did the process accomplish the delivery of the product (results)?
- Was the program structure fully implemented?

The Florida guidelines specified three uses of evaluation data:

1. Monitor the achievement of individual students on competencies and develop a plan for increasing achievement on competencies.
2. Determine the effectiveness of the program for enhancing student attainment of local student development standards. For example:
   - What were the attainment levels of students on local standards?
   - Which competencies were most improved?
   - Which were least improved?
   - Were planned activities fully implemented?
   - What are the priorities for program improvement?
3. Communicate the strengths, benefits, and needs of the programs by using the program plan and evaluation results with groups such as the school board, administration, parents, and community to increase awareness and understanding of the program, to increase support, and to justify resources.

Although the Florida guidelines emphasize change or improvement on the part of students, product evaluation must also specify and report the level of achievement reached by all students. Acceptable standards or expected levels must be the ultimate goal regardless of the range or percent of improvement and change.

Chapter Six addresses several evaluation models and the elements of which they are composed. Although differences are evident among the various ways the elements of an evaluation are categorized, all the models conclude with the need to utilize the findings or results of the evaluation. This step is the main purpose of this chapter and the element that leads to formulating a course of action regarding program activities, resources, and expected results. Figure 1 displays four general categories of results from process and product evaluations that will influence the decisions and actions concerning the guidance program.

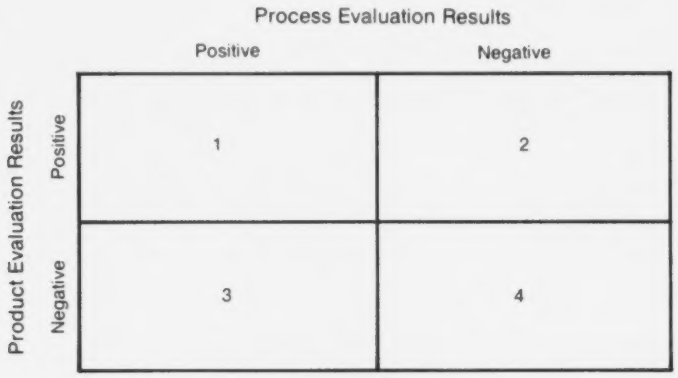


**Figure 5.1**
**Four Categories of Results**

Using Figure 5.1 it is possible to draw the following conclusions from the evaluation data.

**Cell 1.** Both the process and product data show positive results. That is, the program activities are on schedule, are highly regarded by the participants, and meet the criteria established for the program characteristics. Products or outcomes are meeting or exceeding expectations.

**Cell 2.** While product or results expectations are being met, program activities are not effective in providing competencies as a specific result of the program activities; e.g., students can identify career information, but career days are disorganized and few participate.

**Cell 3.** The program or process is functioning according to expectations, but student/client results or competencies are not being exhibited at the level expected; e.g., counselor-led classroom units in study skills are well received, but teacher observations indicate that students do not use the skills in the days immediately following the lessons.

**Cell 4.** Neither program functions nor student/client results are being achieved at the predetermined level of expectation; e.g., copies of the traditional senior newsletter containing information on college visits by representatives are found scattered on campus, and few students attend the sessions.

To use the conceptualization presented in Figure 5.1, the cause-and-effect relationships between the process (program) and the product (results) first must be determined. Did the student/clients achieve the expected competencies and are they a result of the program? For example, let's assume that one of the expected outcomes is for students to be able to correctly assess their characteristics in relation to career or training requirements, and that performance indicators or criteria have been predetermined. The next step is to identify the parts of the program that address this expectation. These could be a one week group guidance curriculum, a career day, use of a computerized career guidance system, or some combination of these and other processes.

Unless the program activities are identified and chosen to address the expected results of the program, it is not feasible to make decisions or take action based on the combined results of the process and product evaluations. Product evaluation asks if students are successful, while process evaluation seeks to determine why. Once the cause-and-effect relationships are established, then a variety of decisions and actions can be determined depending on which cell your results fall in.

**Cell 1.** Indicates both that expected results are being achieved and that the program is operating as planned.

*Decisions/actions*—Maintaining both expectation levels and program functions is a reasonable assumption. Increasing the expectation for level of competencies and reassessing the needs of the students/clients are also considerations if time and resources permit. Expansion and growth of both expectations (competency level) and program are essential to viable programs.

**Cell 2.** While students have achieved the expected outcomes, the program is not functioning as well as expected. Possible reasons: *(a)* the content has not been covered, *(b)* the timelines and program goals have not been achieved, *(c)* personnel do not have the skills necessary to provide the planned program.

*Decisions/actions*—Clearly a change in process or personnel is indicated. A different strategy (e.g., small group vs. individual counseling) or different or retrained personnel may be needed. Since students/clients are achieving expected competencies without (or in spite of) the content or management of the program, possibly a reassessment of student needs would more clearly specify the appropriateness of the level of expectation.

**Cell 3.** The expected outcomes have not been achieved, but the program is functioning as expected.

*Decisions/actions*—The program activities must change to more directly address the competencies expected of students/clients who have experienced the process. Possibly, additional content or activities need to be added to the program. Are personnel capable of delivering the content needed to attain the expected outcomes? Are expected outcomes unrealistic? Should they be lowered?

**Cell 4.** Expected results are not being achieved, and the program is not functioning as planned.

*Decisions/actions*—What other or additional content and activities will provide students/clients with expected knowledge or skills? Is the problem the process or the personnel? Are expectations too high?

The preceding suggestions for decisions and actions emphasize the most important audience for the results of the evaluation program: the counseling staff. Evaluation is primarily used to improve the current program and consequently to have the students/clients achieve the levels of competencies expected of them. Prior to any use of the evaluation data, the counseling staff must anlayze the results and determine how they will be utilized to meet the expectation that they have for students and clients. Once this plan has been agreed upon, it is time to turn to other audiences for support.

## Audiences

The purpose of the evaluation and the types and complexity of the data will determine who will receive a report of the results of the evaluation, what will be reported, when it will be presented, why it will be shared, and how it will be presented. School boards, for example, will be more interested in cost benefits than teachers, who may value information on an increase in students' study skills, while parents might pay more attention to higher achievement scores. Each report, while having common elements, must also be prepared with an intended audience in mind.

**School boards** and **administrators** are similar in the types of information that they require. What are the overall goals for the school districts and how do the results and data provide support to these overall goals? Budget and staffing considerations as well as cost data also interest these groups. **Legislators** and **outside funding agencies** have a similar need for information concerning costs and accountability data.

**Parents, PTAs, community representatives, advisory committees,** and **news media** have some common concerns and requirements. Achievement levels, post-high school choices, social adjustment, and behavior are some areas of interest to nonschool groups. The content of an evaluation report must address the outcomes valued by these audiences.

**Teachers** have a need for information concerning results that affect achievement and learning by the students, as well as how the guidance and counseling program affects and enhances the instructional program. Evaluation results that address student needs and acquired competencies can also serve as the content of staff development workshops for teachers. Teacher participation in helping students reach and demonstrate guidance-related competencies is increased when teachers receive and understand the evaluation data as it relates to student results.

**Students** are interested in how the program serves them and how it operates within the schools. They also want to know their progress in achieving outcomes. Student outcomes or competencies can be presented as individual report cards or progress reports for students and parents or as schoolwide progress reports.

**Counselors and other pupil services colleagues** can use the information to increase their knowledge of student behavior, identify professional development needs, and adjust their individual and team efforts to better serve students, staff, and parents.

It is important to know the audiences and what types of information they need to answer their questions concerning the products and processes of the guidance and counseling program. It is also important to address the needs and questions and anticipate the potential questions of the interested audience. Care should be taken not to overwhelm the audience with too much information or details that detract from its primary interests, decisions, or professional development. Finally, it is imperative that the information be timely. Program and budgeting decisions are set in school districts' schedules. Information that arrives in June is of little help to school board or legislative budget deliberations that take place in March and April. Student achievement data, student learning difficulties, and competency deficiencies are of less value after curriculum, instructional, and course of study decisions have been made. Staff development programs are set to address issues and staff competencies on an annual basis. Information needs to be available when these decisions and plans are made.

## *Evaluation Reports: Content, Format, and Methods*

Planning how to use and report your evaluation information must be completed prior to any data collection. Thinking through this final step may influence the questions to be asked and how data are collected.

In its *Handbook for Evaluation Progam Implementation* (Faddis *et al,* undated) the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory suggests that the first step in summarizing data is to reduce the data into a concise form without sacrificing important detail. Questionnaires, interviews, observations, existing records, and other data should be tallied, totaled, converted to percentages where appropriate, and summarized. Your report should

1. define the purpose of the evaluation,
2. customize the format to the audience (decision makers may need more detail than others), and

3. provide an appropriate technique for describing the results or making comparisons such as: average response, range of responses, frequency distribution, percent of responses, degree of relationship, and/or summaries. Comparative data require statistical methods, and it is important to remember to present the information so it is clear and easily understood by the intended audience.

Morris and Fitz-Gibbon (1978) suggest the following outline for your report.

**Front Cover.** Title of program, name(s) of evaluator(s), name of audience, period covered in report, and date.

**Section I. Summary.** What was evaluated, why, major findings and recommendations, and decisions to be made.

**Section II. Background.** Origin of the program, goals, students involved, context of the program (materials, activities, administrative arrangements), and facility and others involved.

**Section III. Evaluation Study.** Purpose, design, outcome measures (instruments and data collection methods), and implementation measures (instruments used and data collection procedures).

**Section IV. Results.** Results of outcome measurements, results of implementation measurement, and informal results.

**Section V. Discussion of Results.** How certain is it that the program caused the results? How good were the results of the program?

**Section VI. Costs and Benefits** (optional). Your method for calculating costs and benefits, costs associated with the program (dollar and nondollar costs), and benefits associated with the program (dollar and nondollar).

**Section VII. Conclusions and Recommendations.** Conclusions, recommendations regarding the program, and recommendations concerning subsequent evaluations.

Pfister (1985) recommended a similar but simpler set of criteria for communicating evaluation data:

1. An introduction made up of a statement of purpose and brief program description.
2. Recommendations that are directly related to findings (in the author's opinion the most important section of the report, which must precede any details concerning the evaluations).
3. An evaluation design and procedures description that includes instrumentation, data sources, and any limitations of the evaluation (stated as simply and concisely as possible).
4. Findings that report results free from recommendations and explanations.

Pfister also recommended that a common executive summary listing key findings and recommendations be presented to all audiences to minimize expense and to avoid any misinterpretations that might arise if not all audiences receive the same information.

Gysbers and Henderson (1988), in considering the variance in the interests and levels of understanding of different audiences, have suggested that a separate report appropriate for each group is necessary. The diverse interests, they noted, can be

satisfied by preparing a technical report that includes design, statistical data, and evaluation conclusions and a professional report that focuses on conclusions regarding the effectiveness of program activities and recommendations. The basic content of these reports would include:

**Technical reports.** Description of the program, design, results, conclusions, and recommendations.

**Professional report.** A brief summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

In addition to the two reports, Gysbers and Henderson (1988) also recommend that a Student Competency Reporting System be included in the utilization of evaluation results. The system would complement the continuous progress reporting system now being implemented in many instructional areas. Such a system would be a type of student outcome evaluation and would be based on the student competencies or outcomes chosen as the goals of the school guidance and counseling program.

Several methods of reporting are contained in the examples cited above. Most assume that the report will be in written form and include suggestions for technical, professional, and narrative approaches to a written evaluation report. This form of reporting, the most common, often is required, especially in addressing school boards, administrators, and funding agencies. In addition, the written report avoids unnecessary misinterpretation that occurs when evaluation results are released to the news media, community groups, and other audiences that will use the results.

In addition to the written report, it is often helpful and more interesting to present information in a variety of ways geared to inform, impress, and hold the attention of the audience.

Oral reports—especially when accompanied by professionally prepared overhead transparencies (containing comparative data, graphs, and tables and employing different colors, if possible)—can highlight the main findings and conclusions. Oral reports have the advantage of immediate feedback from the audience, clarification of audience questions, and the public relations that come from face to face interchanges. Disadvantages can stem from inadequate communication skills, personality conflicts, and the time constraints that limit the amount of information that can be delivered.

Presentations by students are also a potentially interesting way of maintaining audience interest. But it is crucial that students actually demonstrate competencies and do not simply offer testimonials that can appear to play on the good will of the audience.

The use of outside personnel (experts), as well as members of the evaluation team, can also enhance an oral presentation. Again caution is advised that any second person presentations must address the evaluation program and findings and not simply serve as a testimony to the effort and good intentions of the guidance program staff.

## Summary

This chapter has described two main uses of the information that results from an evaluation of the products and process of a school guidance and counseling program.

The first and primary use of evaluation is the improvement of the program by analyzing the results of the program in relationship to the process or program activities. It was emphasized that the outcomes or the competencies (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) demonstrated by students drive and determine the content, resources, and activities of the guidance and counseling program. These demonstrated student/client competencies must be preceded by predetermined criteria and standards and must be stated in measurable terms.

Program or process evaluation is also necessary for improvement and growth of the program. Program activities and resources must be related to the expected outcomes that students will exhibit. Management, organization, student/client opinion, and additional context data are used in examining the process of the program. The results of product evaluation, when combined with the process results, allow for change, modification, or enhancement of the program and its personnel.

A secondary but essential use of the evaluation results requires convincing others of the relevance of the evaluation results and the need for resources and support to effect the improvement and change dictated by the evaluation findings. How evaluation findings are presented will differ depending on the audience and the purpose of the presentation.

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CHAPTER

SIX

# Implementing the Evaluation Plan: Planning, Forming Questions, Seeking Answers

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After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- identify the elements of specific evaluation models.
- describe the differences between process and results evaluation.
- explain the questions to be addressed according to what aspect of the program is being evaluated.
- list sample evaluation questions to be addressed for different participants, i.e., students, parents, staff.
- explain a variety of ways to collect data.
- develop a comprehensive plan for guidance program evaluation.

Authors seem to agree on the elements of a plan to evaluate guidance programs. However, most authors view the evaluation process as external evaluators, not as persons working within the system to be evaluated. That is, their contributions are directed to those persons who are charged with evaluating a program in which they are not participating. The following presents a system that can be used by both external and internal evaluators. A review of models will be presented, followed by what is to be evaluated, sample questions to be answered, and a suggested evaluation planning format with examples.

The differences among models appear to be only in attempts to categorize elements. For example, one model (Faddis, Evans, Hartzell, Ruzicka, and Morimitsu, undated) has four categories: (1) what is to be evaluated, (2) what questions are to be answered, (3) how the data will be collected, and (4) how the data will be used. Another model (Bissell, 1979) lists seven categories: (1) planning and organization, (2) designing the evaluation, (3) measuring project implementation, (4) measuring student performance, (5) measuring family, school, and community factors, (6) analyzing and reporting factors, and (7) using the findings. The California State Department of Education (1981) proposed ten categories in California's sample evaluation plan: (1) program objectives, (2) evaluation design, (3) assessment instruments, (4) assessment dates and personnel, (5) data analysis, (6) program activities, (7) monitoring dates, (8) reporting dates, (9) who will receive reports, and (10) the use to be made of data. All agree that the completion of an evaluation of a guidance program will bring all elements together in a cohesive system that can be used by guidance personnel and other decision makers to improve the existing program.

## *What Is to Be Evaluated*

The evaluation of any program consists of evaluating both the results and the means (processes and resources) used to achieve the results. There are three kinds of results: immediate, intermediate, and long-range (see Chapter 4). A given evaluation does not necessarily assess all three kinds of results. The determination of what results are to be assessed depends on the information required to improve a given part of the program at the time of evaluation.

**Long-range Results**

The desired long-range results are reflected in the statement of purpose or mission of the program. The evaluation of the long-range results may occur yearly, in a scheduled sequence such as every other or every third year, or in a sequence such as one, three, five, and ten years after graduation. What gets evaluated is the performance of graduates of the program or school. The content of the evaluation is dictated by the questions asked that relate to the statement of purpose, e.g., "Are the graduates leading self-sufficient lives?" "Are the graduates of our program contributing and productive members in their communities?"

**Intermediate Results**

Intermediate results are determined by the goals of the program that are to be reached by the time a student graduates or completes a set of learning activities. Evaluation of goals may be accomplished in two ways. The first is through an aggregate of data regarding the attainment of immediate goals on a yearly basis. Counselors are working with students at each grade level on a continuing basis throughout the year, reporting their results on a predetermined basis, e.g., quarterly, monthly, etc. The manager of the program (administrator) receives the data and compiles it to determine the progress toward program results. The aggregate report provides information on whether students are progressing toward the goal in a systematic, timely manner. When students have demonstrated all (or most) of the immediate results, it can be assumed that they have attained the intended goals. In this type of evaluation, what gets evaluated is the students' attainment of the defined competencies or indicators. It may be argued that learning all the competencies may or may not assure that students have reached the ultimate goal of being able to make a successful transition from high school to their planned post-high school endeavors. If the long-range evaluation indicates that students reach success, however, then it can be assumed that the stated competencies were adequate to prepare them.

The second and more decisive way to evaluate intermediate results is to assess students near the end of their senior year. Written surveys, interviews, review of artifacts such as career folders, resumes, student records of participation in extracurricular activities, post-high school plans, and college acceptance can be used to determine if the students have reached the program goals. This type of senior year comprehensive evaluation is usually done on a periodic basis. Sometimes it is done two or three years in a row for comparison and trend analysis, and then is not done for the following two or three years. *What* gets evaluated are indicators that students have knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to help them reach success in their post-high school endeavors. For example, do students have post-high school plans that match their interests, goals, and aptitudes? Have students applied at appropriate colleges or training programs (school and programs for which they are qualified and that offer the majors or options they want)? Do students have updated resumes? Are students active in community projects?

**Immediate Results**

Immediate results are usually stated in terms of student competencies (or performance indicators) and are measured on an ongoing basis immediately after a competency is taught. Individual counselors can use a data flow system to report immediate results several times a year. The program manager then compiles the data as they are reported and advises counselors of any problems identified as a result of the review of the data. For example, although plans on how counselors will reach the intended results have been approved in advance, necessary changes will be made during the year based on variables that were not anticipated. When such changes are made, there may be areas of duplication with other counselors or other departments, areas that inadvertently get neglected, or new opportunities may become available that were unknown at the time plans were made. The ongoing assessment and reporting of immediate results allow counselors to maximize their time and resources to provide the best possible program for students. Therefore, immediate results are continually being evaluated and reviewed on a daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis. Immediate results are indicators that

students are progressing toward the goals and long-range results of the program. These indicators are specific knowledge, attitudes, and skills measured in each goal area, e.g., educational, career, personal/social, and leisure. Do students have study skills, test-taking skills, social skills, career decision-making skills, knowledge of options within the world-of-work? Do students know their interests, goals, aptitudes, learning styles?

## *Process and Resource Evaluation*

Program improvement is achieved through the results of product and process evaluations used to alter a process or activity, or to add or delete resources to produce a greater quantity or quality of student competencies or outcomes. Processes and resources are only relevant as they affect the assessed student results. For example, the evaluation of a career center (a resource) may indicate a high incidence of use and satisfaction with resources and services, but if students do not acquire specific knowledge, skills, or attitudes, the career center use is irrelevant. If the counselors provide all students with information on what courses to select to meet graduation requirements, and if results show that many of the students are unable to correctly select or identify what has to be taken, the process, although completed as planned, is ineffective.

It is essential to keep in mind that if the primary purpose of the guidance program is to provide all students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required to be successful in life, the evaluation of processes and resources must come back to the determination of how each facilitates the attainment of student results. Means (processes and resources) evaluation determines whether a given process or set of resources is successful in providing the predetermined student results. For example, counselors have traditionally been hired based on a recommended counselor-student ratio, and recommendations for improving guidance programs have most frequently focused on lowering the ratio, much as teachers have recommended lowering class size. In a results-based program, however, it is important to identify the additional student results that could be attained with a lower caseload or ratio of students.

As discussed in Chapter 5, it is imperative that a cause and effect relationship be established between the process and resource evaluation results and the product evaluation results. What gets evaluated is the effectiveness of each process in producing the desired student results. What gets evaluated is also the relationship between the resources being used for the program processes or activities and the student results attained. The purpose of evaluation is to improve the program by changing processes, adding resources, or both.

## What Questions Are to Be Answered

The questions to be answered provide direction to the evaluation of the program areas and the student results that the evaluation will address. Evaluation questions anticipate and define the possible results or products in such a way as to allow the counseling staff and/or others to identify and select the methods that will be used to verify that students have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that constitute the selected results. In addition, the evaluation questions guide the counseling staff in identifying the activities required to address the expected student results and to judge whether the process is functioning in the manner and to the degree that the program plan has specified.

Questions concerning expected student results can address long-range, intermediate, or immediate results or competencies. They can be classified by the content or curriculum domain (educational, career, personal/social) of the program and by the audience to which they are addressed.

Answers to the questions are typically cumulative in nature, that is, immediate results or competencies build to intermediate competencies which in turn contribute to long-range results. Consequently, internal evaluators of programs are concerned with identifying and verifying immediate and intermediate results. Follow-up studies provide verification of the long-range outcomes that are a consequence of the application and utilization of the students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills verified through the internal evaluation program.

Answers to the questions concerning the process and activities of the guidance program will address the current strategies, techniques, and resources in place to assist students to achieve the results specified in the program. Although follow-up data will provide information for making judgments concerning the activities of the program, questions addressing process will concentrate on the efficiency and completeness of the process, resources, and personnel in place to assist students to achieve the expected results of the program.

Typical questions classified by domain, type, and audience follow. They are provided to serve as examples in formulating the questions that will be asked in order to focus the direction of the evaluation.

## Examples of Evaluation Questions

**Students**

1. **Immediate results.** (Questions are related directly to student competencies gained as a result of the ongoing guidance program. These competencies are indicators that students are progressing toward the desired goals.)

   Educational domain of results

   Do students make appropriate school and course selections?

   Do students know their learning styles?

   Can students identify and acquire financial assistance for post-high school options?

   Do students know how to study related to their preferred learning style?

Do students understand the unique requirements of a particular school for achieving academic success?
Do students have standardized and teacher-made test-taking skills?
Do students demonstrate an understanding of the importance of having salable workplace skills as a temporary or permanent option to college completion?
Do students demonstrate responsible classroom and school behaviors?
Do students know the high school course requirements needed to gain acceptance to the school of their choice?

Career domain of results

Do students know required job coping and adjustment skills?
Can the students select a job that meets financial, occupational, and other life goals?
Can students demonstrate interview and credential-building skills needed to acquire the job of their choice?
Do students demonstrate self-confidence and self-marketing skills useful in job search and in job interviews?
Do students understand the range of job options and related occupational skills required for obtaining and succeeding at work?
Are students able to demonstrate career-planning and decision-making skills and techniques that will be transferable throughout their life?
Can students identify and use data and services required to make future decisions concerning job change, advancement, and other career variables?
Do students know how to deal with discrimination by supervisors or peers and with unethical or illegal situations?
Can students predict causes of job stress and demonstrate skills to ward off stress-related elements at work?
Do students understand the interplay and effects of work life on other life roles?
Do students understand the benefits and characteristics of organized labor in the work setting and ways to take advantage of its presence?
Did students formulate career plans prior to selection of a college and major?

Personal/social domain of results

Do students demonstrate self-confidence?
Do students have conflict resolution skills?
Do students demonstrate listening skills by reflecting feelings and content and giving feedback?
Can students identify how they contribute to their school and community?

Impact of unplanned-for results

Have test scores increased?
Are more students completing classes with passing grades?
Are there fewer failures? Better attendance? Higher enrollment in academic classes?
Are there fewer program change requests?
Do test scores rise?
Do more students stay in school?
Are there fewer referrals for classroom or school ground discipline?
Do more students request personal counseling?
Is there a decrease in self-defeating behaviors such as truancy, runaways, and suicides?

2. **Intermediate results (goals).** The following questions sample behaviors that are assessed at high school graduation and are a consequence of the guidance program in conjunction with results gained from other programs and experiences the student has completed.

Educational domain of results

Do students have skills in learning? In locating educational resources? In test taking?
Have students completed a post-high school plan that matches their self-characteristics, e.g., interests, goals, abilities?

Career domain of results

Are students obtaining jobs or entering postsecondary training in the areas for which they were preparing?
Is there evidence that students who have career-planning assistance attend school more consistently, achieve at a higher level, or make more realistic selections?
Are students able to make transitions from education to postsecondary training and from training to work?
Are students aware of declining occupations and are they planning to enter new and emerging fields in high technology and/or fields experiencing skill shortages?
Do students demonstrate the ability to transfer their career planning and job search skills to future midcareer changes that might be required?
Are students proficient in obtaining and using information on financial assistance for postsecondary vocational education and job training?

Personal/social domain

Do students demonstrate knowledge and acceptance of the contributions of others?
Do students demonstrate interpersonal relationship skills? Belonging to a group?
Do students contribute to others in their school, their community, their families?
Do students know the resources available in their communities and how to seek help for personal problems from community resources?

Impact results

Did students apply and gain admission to postsecondary programs?
Were there fewer dropouts, fewer program changes, and increased achievement of students who received guidance assistance?
Have community statistics for teenage substance abuse, delinquency, and violence decreased?
Have the dropout rate, absenteeism, and classroom conflict been reduced?
Is an appropriate level of academic achievement being attained by students?
Are there fewer suicide attempts?
Are there more student requests to see counselors?
Are there fewer reported student-student conflicts?
Are there fewer gang-related incidents on campus and in the community?

3. **Long-range results (purpose).** These questions sample behaviors that can be used to indicate that the student's total schooling experience prepared them for life.

Educational domain

Are former students achieving success in their post-high school educational endeavors?
Are former students well prepared for the demands facing them as college students?
Are former students enrolling in college with a declared major?
Are former students completing college in an appropriate time frame, with minimal changes in major and/or career goals?
Are former students continuing their education after their formal programs are completed?

Career domain

Are former students assuming responsible roles as self-supporting citizens within the community?
Are former students employed in satisfying jobs?
Do former students have a plan for advancement in their field of choice?
Are former students able to seek and gain employment in a field of interest while they are completing their formal education?

Personal/social domain

Are former students active participants and contributors to their community?
Do former students have satisfying lifestyles, families, and/or support groups in their lives?
Are former students willing to come back to the school to share their experiences and successes with current high school students?
Are former students active and successful in a variety of life roles including lifelong learner, worker, community member, citizen, family member, friend?

**Parents**

Educational domain

Do parents know how to establish a home learning environment that is conducive to the student's unique learning style in doing homework?
Do parents know their student's learning style?
Are parents aware of the guidance program goals, philosophy, and purpose?
Are parents aware of their student's post-high school plans and do they approve?
Are the parents aware of the resources available to them in helping their student make college plans and seek financial aid?
Are the parents aware of their student's educational progress?

Career domain

Are the parents aware of the careers/occupations/jobs that are most suited to their student's interests, abilities, and goals?
Are the parents aware of resources they can use to help their student's career development?
Are the parents aware of the student's career goals and do they approve?

Personal/social domain

Are the parents confident of their own parenting style?
Do the parents demonstrate appropriate reinforcement strategies to encourage their student?

Do the parents understand the importance of extracurricular and other positive social experiences for their student and do they encourage participation?
Are the parents aware of symptoms that could indicate that their student is experiencing personal, social, or mental health problems?
Are the parents aware of resources available to help their student with problems?
Do the parents have the information and skills required to monitor their student's educational, career development, and personal/social progress?

**Staff**

Educational domain

Are teachers aware of the processes used by guidance counselors to monitor the students' educational progress?
Do teachers use student learning styles information in planning instructional strategies?
Do teachers have the skills needed for parent-teacher conferences?
Do teachers use appropriate primary and secondary reinforcers to help students learn?
Are administrators and other staff members aware of how they can be instrumental in assisting students in the learning process?

Career domain

Do teachers include information on careers related to their subject areas to help students see relevance in what they learn?
Are teachers aware of students' career interests and stages of career development?
Do teachers use the career center as a resource in presenting career and college-related materials?
Are teachers open to including career speakers and career units as part of their instructional and curriculum options?

Personal/social domain

Do teachers use counseling and guidance resources for students having personal problems?
Are teachers aware of the resources available within the school and the community to assist their students and them with personal concerns?
Do teachers encourage student participation in extracurricular activities?
Do teachers welcome counselor consultations related to problem students?

**Board of Education**

Are school board members aware of the purpose, philosophy, and goals of the guidance program?
Do school board members understand the need for guidance resources and how they are used to reach the guidance program goals?
Are school board members' expectations of guidance results commensurate with the stated purpose, philosophy, and goals of the guidance department?
Are school board members able to answer parents' questions and community inquiries related to the guidance program?
Do school board members agree with and support the basic purpose of the guidance program?
Do school board members demonstrate their support through allocation of funds for necessary guidance resources such as career centers, credit for peer counseling classes, adequate clerical support, and inservice training?

**Administration**

Educational domain

Are administrators aware of the guidance program purpose, philosophy, and goals?
Are administrators' expectations of counselors commensurate with the basic purpose and philosophy of the guidance program?
Do administrators understand and support the results-based guidance program?
Do administrators provide support for the resources required to carry out the guidance program?
Do administrators use counselors' strengths through providing teacher inservice, evening programs, group guidance, and individual counseling?

Career domain

Are administrators supportive of schoolwide guidance activities such as career days?
Do administrators support the career goals of the guidance program by encouraging teachers to cooperate and participate in career-related guidance processes?
Do administrators demonstrate their support by providing career resources such as career centers?

Personal/social domain

Do administrators use counselors' expertise in addressing campus concerns such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, absenteeism, vandalism, and suicide?
Do administrators understand and use the counseling resources available to them, to the staff, and to the students through the guidance program?

**Process and Resource Questions**

When the results have been tabulated and reported, some questions emerge that require consideration about the use of resources and specific processes.

The following are examples provided as a basis for identifying further questions.

- Is the use of computers by counselors cost effective? Could this process be done more efficiently by clerical staff?
- With one secretary for four counselors, would the secretary's time be used more effectively by assigning him/her an office and having counselors take turns answering the phones and students' questions, thereby reducing the counselors' paperwork and making them more visible?
- Because of state and district mandated achievement testing, it takes one counselor's time for nine weeks a year to coordinate, disseminate, collect, and forward booklets and answer sheets. Would students gain more if a teacher, administrator, teacher substitute, or clerk did testing, thereby releasing a counselor to provide additional student results?
- There is a 400:1 student-counselor ratio at the senior high and middle school level and a 900:1 ratio at the elementary school level. Would there be fewer dropouts and failures at the senior high level if the ratios were reversed, i.e., 900:1 at the senior high level and 400:1 at the elementary level? (A way to explore whether good prevention cuts down on intervention.)
- Should counselors be assigned to students? Would the program produce better quantity and quality if students were allowed to choose their own counselor?

- The current expenditure for guidance is $80 per student. Because of budget constraints, it is necessary to lower that to $60 per student. What resources and processes will be cut, or what results are most/least important and is there a way we can cut the budget and get the same results?

The above are examples; however, each can be of importance in the use of data on student results. Each example connotes a value and a decision that will affect the program. The evaluators are encouraged to think through and prepare statements in advance on similar questions they think may be asked.

## *How Data Will Be Collected*

Data collection has been addressed in part in previous sections of this book. It is important to note that information required to answer some questions chosen for evaluation may well come from a variety of sources within the school as well as in the community. Because student results form the basis for the program, students will be the major source of information both directly through demonstration of competencies (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) and indirectly from parent, employer, and/or teacher verification that the expectations have been achieved. In the same manner, if teacher, parent, or administration results are specified as outcomes of the program, these groups become a primary source of information to determine if the expected knowledge, attitudes, and skills have been achieved. Process evaluation questions may also be addressed to these same groups to determine if the program elements are in place and functioning efficiently and are delivered in a timely manner.

The methods and instruments used to collect the required information will vary depending on the results and the audience. Figure 6.1 (on the following page) outlines several data collection techniques that can elicit information directly from students, teachers, or parents, solicit information through a third party, or provide information already available in existing records, reports, and assessment results.

Some evaluation questions can be answered by reviewing data such as grade point averages, individual career plans, attendance reports, achievement and ability test results, and other available information. Other answers, however, may have to come from more extensive efforts such as additional standardized tests, observations, specifically designed tests, interviews, and other methods that require the involvement of students and staff. Consequently, the evaluation questions that are chosen will necessitate a coordinated effort by the guidance program staff and the cooperation of teachers, parents, administrators, and the community. Such an effort requires a data collection plan to answer the identified questions in the most efficient and effective way.

While evaluation questions give direction and focus to the program, verifying and recording the answers must not detract from the process chosen and the time required to achieve the results or distract the students from accomplishing the goals expected of them. The collection of the data must be, to whatever extent possible, an integral, efficient, and unobtrusive part of the total guidance program.

**Outcomes and Evaluation Methods**

| Outcomes | Possible Evaluation Method |
|---|---|
| Application<br>Concept acquisition<br>Memorization of facts<br>Problem solving<br>Comprehension<br>Skills | Objective test, product evaluation, rating scale, checklist |
| Performance | Rating scale, checklist, product evaluation |
| Classroom behavior | Rating scale, checklist, attendance record |
| Interest | Questionnaire, checklist, interest inventory |
| Attitude | Rating scale, questionnaire, checklist, objective test |
| Aspiration level | Rating scale, interview, objective test, open-ended sentences, word association test |
| Adjustment | Rating scale, anecdotal report, interview, sociogram, records |

**Figure 6.1**
**Source: The New England Educational Assessment Project (1966)**
***A guide to assessment and evaluation procedures.* Providence, RI**

Guidance program results based on the mission and philosophy of the school district can be validated by much of the data collected routinely by district assessment programs, administrative reports, central office or building records, and teacher observations and reports. Using these existing data and/or including guidance program data needs in the existing processes can provide information with a minimum of change in district or school procedures and record keeping.

Where additional data collection is required to verify that students have achieved intermediate results, consistent, systematic verification and recording of immediate results as they are achieved by students can lessen or eliminate the need for special end-of-year assessment, because intermediate competencies are an accumulation of immediate results. Answers to questions concerning long-range results specific to the guidance program can be a part of the school district's follow-up program as well as a part of periodic community surveys.

The data necessary to answer some questions might have to be collected through a separate administration of assessment instruments. Because all expected immediate and intermediate results are stated in measurable terms, it may be preferable to develop criterion referenced tests that verify or measure the achievement of students on the expected competencies.

Some existing standardized tests may also provide the data needed to measure the achievement of these competencies. A variety of interest, aptitude, achievement, values, personality, and other instruments exists that may meet the needs of the evaluation plan. By examining current reviews of these instruments and obtaining sample copies, the exact fit of these commercial instruments to your data needs can be ascertained.

Some excellent sources of information on standardized tests are:
*A Counselor's Guide to Career Assessment Instruments*, Jerome T. Kapes and Marjorie Moran Mastie, Editors. Published by the National Career Development Association, this extensive reference reviews 43 of the most commonly used aptitude, interest, values, career development, and personality instruments. In addition 126 other instruments are briefly described. Addresses of all test publishers are included. It is available from the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD).

*The Mental Measurement Yearbook* provides a detailed review of most available assessment instruments. This classic reference is updated frequently and is available at most libraries.

The Association for Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development (AMECD) provides current reviews of tests in each issue of its journal, *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*. AMECD is a division of the American Association for Counseling and Development. The journal is available in most college and university libraries. AACD and AMECD have also published a position statement concerning the responsibilities of test users. They identified four major uses of tests: (1) for placement and selection, (2) to predict performance or behavior, (3) for diagnosis or description of behavior, and (4) to provide data to give systematic information and depict growth. These guidelines focus on four general categories of tests: aptitude and ability, achievement, interest attitude and values, and perceptual-motor tests.

The American Psychological Association publishes *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. These standards provide criteria for the evaluation of tests, testing practices, and the effects of test use.

It is evident that if the evaluation plan is to be manageable and unobtrusive it must be an ongoing component of the total guidance program. The results expected and the process selected are primary to what is to be evaluated and how it is to be verified. Evaluation questions are asked at the initiation of program planning and provide direction to the continuing focus of the program and the redirection of future emphasis of the program.

Careful attention must be given to the design, methods, timelines, and personnel involved from the beginning of guidance program planning. The evaluation plan must clearly indicate what is to be evaluated and why, how, and when the evaluation will be carried out, and it must identify the responsibilities of all involved in the process. It must also provide formative data for ongoing corrections, summative data for future changes, and evidence to support continuing or expanded support for the guidance program.

Using information from Chapters 1-5 and from references, the following is an example of a plan to evaluate a guidance program.

**Planning and Organizing**

1. **Purpose of evaluation.** Determine the purpose of the evaluation, because the purpose may dictate what is to be evaluated as well as how it is to be done.

   ***Example A.*** **The purpose of this evaluation is to determine if students know how to use career information in selecting a career plan.**
   This evaluation can be as simple as having students use information in determining steps to reach the career of their choice. Their use can be validated by teachers, counselors, or other adults.

   ***Example B.*** **The purpose of this evaluation is to determine why qualified students do not enroll in advanced classes.**
   This can be answered through structured interviews with parents and students separately or together coupled with a review of grades of students currently enrolled.

   ***Example C.*** **The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effect the guidance program has on students' classroom performance.**
   This may require a review of student records to determine who had guidance instruction on learning, a review to see which teacher had consultation or inservice by counselors on classroom techniques, or possibly in-depth structured interviews as well as a paper/pencil assessment.

2. **Audience.** The audience for the report has a major impact on the questions, the data collected, and the way in which the report is prepared.

   ***Example D.*** **In order to expand the elementary guidance program, impact data from the current program is needed for a report to the Board of Education.**
   The data should include student results, staff and parent results, and any impact information such as higher test scores, fewer referrals, or less vandalism.

   ***Example E.*** **The guidance staff needs to know if the parent effectiveness groups are having an effect on student attendance and behavior.**
   Past and current attendance records, teacher observations, referral records, and discipline records of targeted students will provide the data needed by the staff in considering program changes.

   ***Example F.*** **The superintendent has requested information on the effectiveness of group guidance in middle school.**
   This audience will want information on what group guidance is going on and on what subject, and what impact this has on students' learning. Such a report might include recommendations centered on implementation of a teacher adviser program.

3. **Questions.** The questions must address the purpose of the evaluation as well as explicitly answer any questions from a specific audience.

   ***Example G.*** **The principal wants to know, "How is the Career Center doing?"**

   The questions "Do students know the location of the Career Center?" or "Do students know what is in the Career Center?" both seem inadequate to measure effectiveness. A set of questions such as those that follow provides more accurate formative data to answer the principal's question: "What is the GIS and how is it used?" "Name four resources in the Career Center and describe what information is in each." "Are the students' Educational and Career Planning Folders up-to-date?" "Does each eleventh grade student have an up-to-date resume?"

4. **Program audit.** A program audit provides information as to whether the goals and objectives address the areas to be evaluated. The audit can be completed by comparing program elements against those in Figure 1 in Chapter 2 or Figure 2 in Chapter 3. The comparison will help to determine if your program is ready for evaluation and will help identify and correct missing or incomplete program elements.
5. **Needs assessment.** It is important to review available needs data collected by decision makers. This may aid identification of areas of concern and/or aid data collection.
6. **Participants.** Participants in the evaluation process should be identified as early as possible and be involved in all planning. The relationships between project staff and evaluators (internal and external staff) and between guidance program evaluators and other district evaluation staff must be well defined. Equally important, the ongoing roles of parents, staff, students, and other community members must be clearly delineated.
7. **Evaluation team.** Establish an evaluation team that has representative expertise in all areas pertinent to evaluating the entire project.
8. **Training.** Identify training needs for the evaluation team and develop plans to complete training.
9. **Costs.** Determine as closely as possible the cost of completing the evaluation and make a judgment as to appropriateness in the context of the total budget.
10. **Schedule.** Develop a schedule of time lines for the tasks to complete the evaluation. For example:
    - Committee meets, reviews plans ..... October 4
    - Committee develops evaluation design ..... October 11
    - Committee completes detailed evaluation design ..... October 18
    - Committee presents complete evaluation plan to superintendent's counsel for approval ..... October 25
11. **Monitoring.** Establish monitoring dates and the role of the monitoring team. This will include who will perform the function, frequency of reports, and to whom reported.
12. **Special issues.** All special issues pertinent to the evaluation will be identified and, when possible, considered in the design and processes.

**Evaluation Design**

1. **Questions.** Delineate questions to be answered.
2. **Data.** Specify what information must be produced to satisfy what audience.
3. **Coordination.** The questions and required information should be developed in conjunction with project staff, consultants, and other team members.
4. **Comparison.** If possible, specify a comparison procedure to estimate what the participants' performances might have been without the guidance program.
5. **Sampling.** Determine the sampling procedures.
6. **Data collection.** Set procedures and time to collect data.
7. **Instrumentation.** Determine the kinds of assessment instruments and strategies needed to collect the required information (structured interviews, observations, criterion-referenced or norm-referenced tests, self-reporting questionnaires/rating scales, attendance, GPA's, etc.).
8. **Data analysis.** Determine kinds of scores that will be most useful and most appropriate, and who will do the analysis.
9. **Written report.** Decide on the form of the final report.
10. **Feedback.** A means should be developed to allow persons affected by the evaluation results to review the evaluation findings, to provide feedback on identified problems, and to offer suggestions for modifications. These persons might be parents, advisory council, counselors, or administrators.

**Reporting Results**

1. **Written report.** The report of the evaluation includes a description of the project and objectives, how the evaluation was conducted, the findings, a discussion of the findings, a set of recommendations for program changes or a number of options for adoption, and an Executive Summary.
2. **Oral report.** Materials must be developed for presentations unique to specific audiences, i.e., for the Board of Education, administrators, parents, community groups, and the guidance advisory councils. Who will present to what group must also be determined.

**Use of Findings**

1. **Changes.** Develop a system to collect input from various groups or suggest actions that might be taken to address specific recommendations.
2. **Follow-up.** Develop a set of follow-up procedures with reporting dates to provide information on the progress of implementing the corrective actions.

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# The Person-Oriented Approach in Evaluating Career Guidance Programs

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The preceding content of this guide has centered on evaluating current guidance programs, utilizing the strategies, techniques, and technology typically available within school districts. The following is a presentation of how guidance will be evaluated in the future—on a student-by-student basis. New technology portends easy, rapid, and accurate collection of data from each student. It will allow for automatic aggregation of data to provide information to ensure that **all students** acquire the necessary life skills to become contributing members of society. In some instances the following case study may already be a possibility, and where it is not currently feasible, the authors recommend that planners study individual evaluation as they chart new directions for guidance programs.

The effectiveness of career guidance programs is a critical question on several levels—policy determination, program implementation, and personal satisfaction and success. This epilogue builds upon the collective conclusions of previous reviews (Crites, 1987) and extrapolates from them, as well as present theory and research and new models and methods for evaluating career guidance programs, especially as they affect and influence the individual student. The focus of this approach is person-oriented. It recognizes and emphasizes the individual student, not only as a client, but also as the *basic* unit of analysis for any kind of program evaluation. The rationale for this viewpoint is that the effects of career guidance programs are not uniform and monolithic. Policy statements typically assume the uniformity myth, and programs often are designed accordingly, yet individual students may react quite differently to the same career guidance program. Whatever the reason for these differing reactions, the implication is that greater attention to individual differences among students must be given in both policy statements and program designs. In other words, choice of career guidance models and methods (Crites, 1981) becomes a consideration of what the most desired outcomes of the counseling are for *this* student and how these can best be achieved with him/her at this time.

## The Person-Oriented Approach to Career Guidance: Theory

The central concept in this approach is what has been termed Career-By-Objectives (CBOs) (Crites, 1987). The analogue for CBOs in career counseling comes from the well-established practice of MBOs (Management-By-Objectives) in business and industry. Following *reverse programming* principles and procedures, the rationale for specifying MBOs is first to delineate what the desired outcomes of a program are and then to "work back" through each step that is necessary to achieve the objectives. Not only does this process establish an accountability criterion for the program, that is, the extent to which the objectives are attained, but it also eliminates through reverse programming unnecessary steps for goal attainment. Because goal-irrelevant steps are eliminated, the cost effectiveness of MBO programs is appreciably greater than more global approaches that are less specific and directed. Costs can be objectively defined by amount of time invested in the program as compared with others, the resources expended ("dollars and cents"), the number of personnel needed to achieve the objectives, and so on, all of which can be factored in as parameters for a cost benefit analysis. Thus, inherent in MBO programs are the criteria for evaluating them, the parallel for assessing the effectiveness of career guidance programs being obvious.

The concept of CBOs is new and needs to be articulated further to indicate how it is at the core of a person-oriented approach to career guidance. Following the rationale for MBO programs, the first step would be: What outcome(s) does this student want from his/her contacts with the career guidance counselor? Answers to this question may range from choice among career options to how a course of study relates to particular careers. Or, as is so often true of undecided students, the objective is to decide on an objective. The counselor and client work collaboratively on formulating CBOs that can be achieved within a given time frame, which is frequently a central consideration in career guidance because clients typically want to make a decision "right now." This

sense of urgency (or what Crites [1981] has termed the "immediacy imperative") must be built into the second step in CBO career counseling, which is to specify what has to be done to accomplish an objective, beginning with the next to last behavior or activity and reverse programming to the beginning of the career counseling process. If contingencies arise in these behavioral acts in implementing the plan, then appropriate changes are made collaboratively by client *and* counselor, but they must be consistent with the CBOs. Also, if it becomes apparent during the guidance and counseling process that the objectives need revision, then new CBOs are delineated, along with steps necessary to attain them. Thus, this approach to person-oriented career guidance incorporates flexibility while it achieves specificity.

To illustrate how reverse programming was used with an actual client, consider the case of Randy, a high school senior who came for career counseling because he was undecided. During the first interview, it became apparent that his primary CBO was to make a career choice, but that he had no idea of how to accomplish this objective, never having made a major life decision before. The counselor explained that before he could make a career choice he needed to relate his aptitudes and interests to those required by different occupations and identify those that were most realistic for him. To do this, Randy first needed to have information about himself and the world of work. The counselor pointed out, however, that to use this information in translating his self-concept into a compatible occupational role, he had to be career-ready or mature enough to make a decision. Because he came for career counseling due to his indecision, it seemed important to assess his career readiness (career maturity). Therefore, Randy and the counselor agreed upon the following sequence of steps in the career counseling plan:

- last step: declare career choices and chart career paths
- fifth step: gather occupational information
- fourth step: interpret test results
- third step: take aptitude tests and interest inventory
- second step: increase career readiness
- first step: assess career readiness

Reversing these steps, the counseling began with Randy taking the Career Readiness Inventory (CRI) and progressing through the remaining steps to his CBO.

**Crites Career Counseling**
**Career Development—Exploratory Stage**

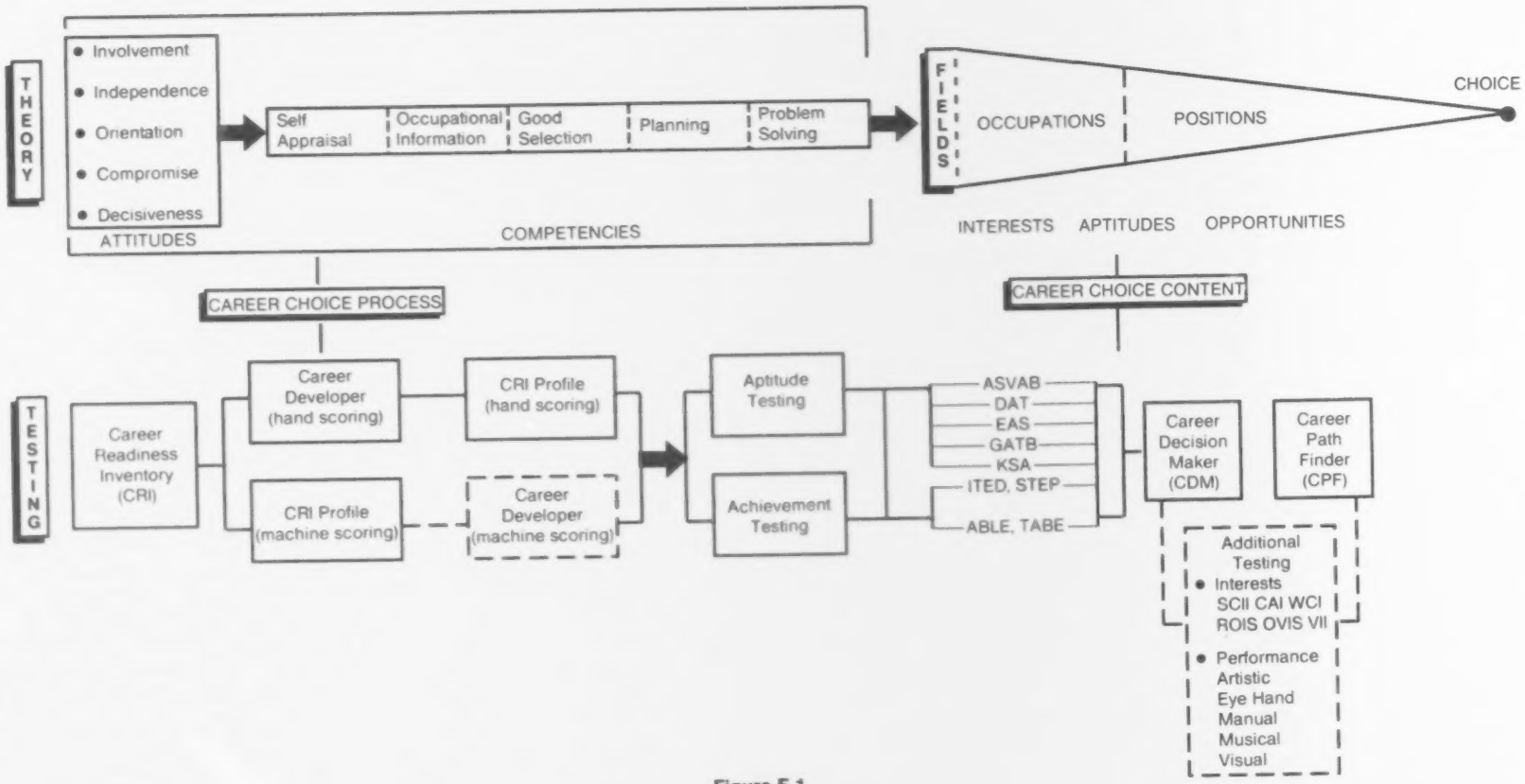


**Figure E.1**
**A systems approach**
**to person-oriented career guidance**

This highly abbreviated summary of the career counseling for Randy reflects a general schematic for career counseling based upon the systems approach shown in Figure E.1. There are three levels in the system, the topmost being Theory, which represents the distinction made previously between career choice *process* and career choice *content* (Crites, 1978). To the left are the process variables *attitudes* and *competencies* that determine the readiness of an individual to make a career choice. Analogous to the concept of reading readiness, career readiness is a *sine qua non* for career decision making. If a student is sufficiently career ready (has mature attitudes and competencies), then he or she can make a realistic career choice, based on aptitudes, interests, and opportunities, as depicted on the right side of Figure E.1. This progressive "funneling" of career options, through what Tyler (1961) calls the "exclusion process," culminates in a career choice—and its implementation in job search and placement.

On the Testing level of the system, the process and content components of career choice are given operational definition by inventories, tests, booklets, and forms that are used in the person-oriented (CBO) approach to career guidance. For example, The Career Readiness Inventory (CRI) (Crites, 1985b), a second generation revision of the Career Maturity Inventory (CMI) (Crites, 1978), measures the degree of career development of the student's choice attitudes and competencies. The CRI can be either hand or machine scored and the results interpreted with the Career Developer (Crites, 1984), which also "teaches the test," so that by explaining the career-ready responses to the CRI, career maturity is significantly increased (Crites, 1985c).

Given a sufficient threshold of career readiness, the student next takes aptitude and interest measures as a basis for career choice content. As shown in Figure E.1, there are different branches along which the testing can proceed. If assessment of previous learning in such areas as language, mathematics, and reading are necessary, then the client would take one of the many standardized achievement tests which are available, or the scores which may be in the student's cumulative record, e.g., from an achievement battery such as the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED), could be used. If there are below average areas on the achievement tests, remedial education may be necessary before administration of aptitude tests for career counseling. However, if achievement levels are adequate, then a good multi-factor aptitude battery can be administered (if not already available).

In the system depicted in Figure E.1, the Career Decision Maker (CDM; see discussion below) reports and interprets the scores from the aptitude battery. Originally, the CDM was keyed to the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), on which there is the most extensive data available for defining and delineating Occupational Aptitude Patterns (OAP's). The GATB has been administered to senior high school students across the nation for many years. If GATB scores are recorded for a student, they can be used in the microcomputer system (see next section) to compare the student's aptitudes to 66 OAP's which include all 12,000 occupations in the world of work and to identify those for which the student is qualified.

Similarly, there is now available, and field tested, a form of the Career Decision Maker (CDM) that can be used with the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Since the ASVAB is administered to over one million high school students each year, without charge, there is a great advantage economically to using it with the ASVAB/CDM form and the coordinated Career Path Finder (CPF) reference which can be used to chart both civilian *and* military career paths. The CDM not only prints out the ASVAB academic and occupational composites, but it also translates these into OAP's using the GATB database. The CPF can then be used with either the Guide for Occupational Exploration (GOE) reference or the computerized Career Information System (CIS) to gather occupational information on career options and paths. The Military Career Guide (MCG) reference is also keyed to the CPF to explore military careers, many of which may be cognate with the student's civilian career paths.

Finally, if neither the GATB nor the ASVAB is available, the CDM can be used with selected tests of the Employee Aptitude Survey (EAS), which measures variables comparable to the GATB verbal, numerical, spatial, and clerical factors. Neither the EAS nor the ASVAB appraises the GATB manual dexterities, which require performance tests. The other two multi-aptitude batteries, the Differential Aptitude Tests (DAT) and the Knowledges-Skills-Abilities (KSA) Survey, have not been linked to the CDM through the GATB database at the present time. The Career Decision Maker (CDM), on which the multi-factor aptitude scores and OAP's are printed from the microcomputer system, is designed along programmed instructional principles. It has four parts that systematically take the student through the career choice process.

The first enumerates the three steps in this process, following the "Matching Model," beginning with "Step 1: Rank your INTERESTS," then proceeding to "Step 2: Know your APTITUDES," and culminating with "Step 3: Make your CHOICE." The second part defines the personal orientations and work environments in Holland's (1979) RIASEC system and asks the student to rank them in order of preference from high (1) to low (6). The third part reports and interprets the scores from the multifactor aptitude battery, as well as relating them to predicted Levels of Educational Development (LED). Lastly, the fourth part collates the interest rankings and aptitude results with the OAP's printed in the squares of the "Career Choice Chart." On this chart, the student outlines in pen or pencil the sequence which corresponds to his/her highest three ranked interests (or Career Fields) at the attained Career Level defined by the general aptitude score. Within the squares are the OAP's for which the student qualifies. Here, then, brought together in one place is the student's *vocational self-concept*, based upon the best and most comprehensive objective test information available.

At this point in the overall process, additional tests (Figure E.1) may be administered to provide supplementary information on a student's capabilities. Although ranked or self-expressed interests are as good or better predictors of eventual occupation-engaged-in (Holland and Lutz, 1968; Borgen and Silling, 1978; Dolliver, 1969) than standardized interest inventories, the latter may be useful with clients like Randy, who are undecided or indecisive (Crites, 1981). Furthermore, additional assessments may be needed to appraise special talents, such as artistic and musical aptitudes, as well as gross and fine manual dexterities. Scores from such measures can be integrated with OAP's printed in the squares of the CDM.

The next (and last) stage in the career choice process leading to career choice content is to translate the student's vocational self-concept (aptitudes, interests, etc.) into compatible occupational options. This objective is accomplished by means of the Career Path Finder (CPF), also constructed along programmed instructional principles. In a stepwise fashion, it takes the student from a SURVEY (Step 1) of the world of work, to a narrowing of CHOICE(S) (Step 2), finally to a charting of a primary and secondary career PATH (Step 3) over the next five years. In the SURVEY part of the CPF, the student records the information from the "Career Choice Chart" of the CDM on what amounts to the world of work—a listing of all the GATB 66 work groups cross-classified by career fields and levels. Indexed to each of these work groups are the corresponding sections of the Guide for Occupational Exploration (GOE), which provides current descriptions of the work performed, capabilities needed, and opportunities in the field.

From this survey, the student then selects six occupations, using the Career Choice Checklist in the CHOICE part of the CPF. Following an elimination process, the student progressively narrows these choices to two, one designated *primary* and the other *secondary*. These are projected in the last part of the CPF (PLAN) over the next five years as career paths, using the completed example for a career in computer programming as a model. Thus, the student systematically arrives at two concrete, "in hand" career paths from an objective assessment of personal characteristics and a matching of these with those required by occupations in the world of work, using documented information. But probably even more important, the student learns general decisional skills by following the stepwise format of the CDM and CPF, which research evidence indicates generalizes to other areas of life decision-making.

This systems approach to career guidance has been made operational by the increasing availability and use of microcomputers. If it were not for the recent developments in synchronized computer and peripheral technology, the systems approach to career guidance would not be possible. However, there are now three components available that make the system a reality and have made possible its field testing during the past five years. The first component is a National Computer System (NCS) Sentry 3000 Scanner, through which aptitude and interest answer sheets can be processed and scored by the computer in a matter of seconds. The second component, a personal computer (e.g., IBM PC/XT), not only scores the aptitude tests and interest inventories, but also through a specifically developed software program (Crites, 1985a) matches the student against all 12,000 occupations in the economy and prints out the realistic career options on the CDM in less than a minute. Thus, the technology accomplishes in a fraction of the time the profile or psychograph (Crites, 1969) comparisons that took counselors, using inspectional/subjective techniques, many hours to complete. The software can also be used on the mainframe when assessment scores are uploaded to gain greater macro capability. If a scanner is not available, scores from the aptitude tests can be key entered in the microcomputer, although this is a sizable task when there are large numbers of students—and the error rate is greater than with the scanner.

Using the storage and retrieval capabilities of the microcomputer, a variety of data on each student can be processed to assess goal attainment (career counseling success) and to aggregate outcomes across students for the evaluation of career guidance programs in schools and districts. Primary data for such analyses are: *(a)* the goal attainment scale score, *(b)* client attributes (demographic and/or psychometric), and *(c)* type of "treatment" or approach used in the career counseling. Other significant parameters that can be factored in are *(a)* number of client contacts, *(b)* length of each contact, *(c)* counselor/client gender, *(d)* individual and/or group guidance, and so forth. All data can be entered into the microcomputer either on scannable forms or by manual key entry by the counselor or a clerk. A file is created in the computer for each student that can be manipulated for any number of relevant statistical analyses. These will vary, of course, from one program to another, but the basic evaluation software can be uniform for any situation in which there is an interest in accountability and cost-benefit analysis. Descriptive statistics on program activities for administrative purposes can also be generated as can cumulative career records. Appropriate software is currently being developed for these analyses, which require no statistical knowledge or training by the counselor.

To illustrate the application of this process, further description of the goal attainment scale is necessary. Approximately 20 years ago, goal attainment scales (GAS) were proposed by Kiresuk and Sherman (1968) to provide a criterion for evaluating mental health programs. The rationale for GAS is that this procedure can be used whatever the goals or objectives of counseling are, as has been proposed for the definition and measurement of vocational success (Crites, 1969). Much as their name connotes, goal attainment scales ask the client and/or counselor how much the counseling has achieved the goals initially set at the beginning of the counseling. In other words, to what extent has the goal(s) been attained—none at all, somewhat, closely, or completely. For career counseling/guidance, a Likert-type unidirectional scale, like the one shown in Figure E.2, can be used. Note that the Career-By-Objective (CBO) which is agreed upon by client and counselor at the outset of the career counseling/guidance is entered on the form where it says "CBO." Then, when the career counseling/guidance has been completed, using separate forms, the client and counselor rate how closely the CBO has been attained.

CBO: _____

_____

To what extent has this objective been achieved through career guidance? Place a check (✓) on the line to indicate degree of goal attainment.

| little or none (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | mostly or completely (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Figure E.2**
**Career-By-Objective (CBO) Goal Attainment Scale**

The great advantage of this procedure is that different goals or objectives can be measured on the same scale, which means that the goal attainment by one client can be directly compared with that of another client even though their goals or objectives were different. In this way, GAS scores can be aggregated across clients and analyzed statistically, using the same metric, for any number of "break outs," such as counselor differences, individual vs. group career guidance differences, grade/school differences, etc. Analysis can also be made of the relationships (correlations) of GAS with individual difference variables, such as achievement and gender. Thus, the systems approach to person-oriented career guidance can evaluate how effectively programs assist individuals in the attainment of their career goals *and* how the results impact and suggest revisions in policy statements (Crites, 1987).

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Appendix
A

# Needs Assessment Models: What, Why, When, and When Not

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Needs assessment in a results-based guidance program is analogous to needs assessment in any other competency-based curriculum program. The mathematics program, for example, does not base its curriculum or course of study on students' opinion of their need for math skills. Nor does it first test students, identify what they do not know, and address the curriculum only to those deficiencies. In order to ascertain what students do not know it is first necessary to establish what they should know. Learning expectations or standards must be in place prior to identifying such deficiencies or gaps.

In the mathematics program as in all school curriculum areas (including guidance) professionals identify desired results and develop and implement a program (curriculum). Needs data and subsequent program change and improvement come from measuring students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in relation to what is expected of them at a specified time or level.

In Chapter 2, the collection and use of needs data constitute the eighth element in the results-based guidance program. In that program, needs are viewed not as perceived but rather as actual performance gaps. The collection and use of such needs data are a part of the continual program evaluation and improvement and do not precede program design and implementation.

Typically and historically counselors have used needs assessment as the first step in program planning. Most process-based programs continue to use needs data in this manner. That is, perceived needs of various groups to be served by the program are surveyed and the program is designed to react to the desires of the various groups. The different perceptions among the groups (students, teachers, parents, administrators) are noted and decisions are made to accommodate these differences in planning and scheduling various resources and activities.

Needs data and their use will vary with the reasons for the needs assessment and the definition of need used within the guidance program. Several types of needs assessment are currently used in guidance programs.

In a results-based or competency-based program "needs" are defined as the gap or the difference between actual and desired results or competencies. Needs assessment is the measurement and/or verification of these differences. If other types of needs data are collected and used, they must serve as a supplement to these results-based needs.

In order to provide additional data to, or involve additional audiences in the guidance program, some programs, in moving from a service- or process-based model to a results-based model may have a desire (and ample time and resources) to include, in addition to an "actual" needs assessment, a "perceived" needs assessment. A brief description of various types of needs assessments are provided to assist programs in collecting data based on both actual competency needs and perceived competency or process needs.

## *Type I*
## *Needs Based on Competency Demonstration*

A results-based program is inductively developed first, prior to the assessment and use of student needs data. After the program has been designed and all elements implemented, needs assessment seeks to determine the gaps or the difference between predetermined, expected, or desired results and the actual immediate, intermediate, and/or long range results (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) that students, teachers, and/or parents have acquired. Only after the expected or desired results have been identified by the professional staff and a program is in place, is it necessary to assess the present level of competencies in the determined areas. If, for example, it is found after testing, observation, etc., that all students are currently meeting expectations for a particular result, then, at this time, for this result, and for this particular group there is no need for program change. In all probability resources and program activities addressing this expected result would be continued at their present level.

If students are not performing as expected or cannot demonstrate competencies in specified areas, however, different strategies or resources may have to be focused on this need. This form of needs assessment clearly aims at identifying the level of competence in relation to predetermined criteria or standards. Without directly addressing current strategies, resources, and program components, or identifying new ones, this type of needs assessment can clearly provide evidence that change or improvement is necessary to eliminate the gaps between desired and actual results. The severity of the deficiency or gap along with other considerations can also provide direction to staff in determining change and program priorities. When combined with program audit results, process and resource evaluation, and other product evaluation data, needs identified in this manner provide direction for program improvement. In essence this type of needs assessment is a part of the formative evaluation procedures.

Unlike the preceding program, *The Comprehensive Guidance Program for Texas Public Schools* (1991), while using a competency-based approach to guidance programs, establishes the assessment of student and community needs as the center of the local program development process. It emphasizes that the design of the guidance program should be based on a knowledge of the students' and community's needs and a consideration of current and potential resources available. Needs data are grouped into three categories: (1) demographic data (mobility, rates, language, socioeconomic scale, immigration patterns, etc.); (2) student achievement data (test scores, mastery of essential elements, dropout rate, promotions/retentions, student grades); and (3) student conduct data (discipline, attendance, school participation).

These data are then used to determine the quantitative (quantity of resources to devote to each program component) design of the program and the qualitative design which includes a description of each *component* and the priorities in each component; the *content* of the program including competences and priorities for each grade level; and the *populations* to be served such as students, teachers, administrators, and parents, and the priorities for each.

## *Type II*
## *Needs Based on Student, Teacher, and Parent Opinions of Competency Achievement or Deficiency*

Gysbers and Henderson (1988) see this type of needs assessment as a useful tool in the program improvement process but do not recommend it as an initial task.

> Although this assessment can be done first, we do not believe the results will be as useful as those of one done during this phase of the program improvement process. A major reason we recommend waiting until this phase is that it is not until now that you have identified the student competencies for your program. And, in the type of assessment we are proposing, student competencies statements become, in effect, the needs assessment items. In fact, this part of the designing process could just as well be called our inventory of student competencies—an inventory of where students are in competency development and where they would like to be in their competency acquisition. (166)

The difference between the first type of needs assessment (competency demonstration) and this type (student opinion) can be noted in the fact that in this second type of assessment students are asked to give their *opinion* of their current status (not demonstrate it), and their opinion of *their* expected level of competency (not predetermined standards by staff). These needs data are based on what students think they can do compared with what they wish they could do. Without further efforts to substantiate them, they are useful but unverified. An example of this type of needs assessment is:

To fill out this questionnaire, students were asked to complete the following steps.

Step 1: Read each sentence carefully. Each one describes things students are able to do in order to demonstrate learning in that particular area.

Now make a decision. Are you able to do what the sentence describes? Are you unable to do what the sentence describes?

Fill in the circle that shows what you think.
If you think you are able to do what the sentence describes. . .

fill in circle a ⓐ ⓑ ⓒ

If you think you are not able to do what the sentence decribes. . .

fill in circle b ⓐ ⓑ ⓒ

Step 2: Choose the five sentences on each page that describe what you would really be interested in learning to do. Some of the statements will really interest you and some will not. In the second column (circles are lettered c), fill in the circle for each of the five statements that you feel you need to learn how to accomplish.

For example:

| **I CAN** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. evaluate the importance of having laws and contracts to protect producers. | ⓐ | ⓑ | ⓒ |
| 2. provide examples of decisions I have made based on my attitudes and values. | ⓐ | ⓑ | ⓒ |

## *Type III*
## *Needs Based on Opinions Concerning Importance of Competencies*

Another form of needs data collected by competency-based guidance programs addresses the importance attached to the competencies or results expected from the program. This type of data is usually collected in combination with other types of needs data. The following example from the Florida Department of Education is based on a similar instrument found in the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee's Implementation Guide and is an example of such a combination in that it collects opinions on both importance and achievement of competencies.

**Career Development Needs Assessment**
**Sample Instrument**

POSITION: _____ Administrator _____ Teacher _____ Counselor
_____ Student _____ Parent _____ Other

GRADE LEVEL:

INSTRUCTIONS:
We are conducting a survey of the career development needs of our students. This survey lists attitudes, skills, and knowledge that are related to effective career awareness and exploration. Read each item and give it **two different ratings:** (1) **importance**—for students in our school, and (2) **student achievement**—your perceptions of how many students in our school already have the attitude, skills, or knowledge.

Circle your choice using the following **importance** scale:

| Of Great Importance | | | | Of Little Importance |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Circle your choice using the following **student achievement** scale:

| No Students 0-10% | Few 11-30% | Some 31-70% | Most 71-90% | All Students 91-100% |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Competency 1: Knowledge of the influence of a positive self-concept on career development.

1. Students can access personal likes and dislikes.

| Importance | | | | | Perceived Achievement | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | _____ |

2. Students can assess individual attributes required for successfully fulfilling different roles.

| Importance | | | | | Perceived Achievement | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | _____ |

The above example asks respondents to assess needs (importance and achievement) in the third person. That is, students, administrators, teachers, etc. are asked to respond for students in general, not for their own personal needs. This type of needs survey also could be changed to address a student's opinion of his/her own achievement and the importance he/she attaches to a competency.

## *Type IV*
## *Needs Based on Opinion of Resources, Strategies, and Services Provided in the Guidance Program*

This fourth type of needs data can be collected as a part of a follow-up study as well as ongoing needs assessment surveys. This type of needs assessment solicits student, teacher, or parent opinions concerning school programs and resources. It indirectly identifies perceived needs by asking respondents to rate their degree of satisfaction with various features and services of the guidance or total school program. The following samples provide examples of this indirect approach.

| | | Does not apply | Very satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SERVICES | 1. School district transportation system (buses, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2. Guidance services (counseling, college planning, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 3. Special academic programs (accelerated/gifted ed., special ed., etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4. Special tutorial assistance (remedial reading, tutors, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ACTIVITIES | 5. Sports-related activities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 6. Fine arts activities (band, theater, art exhibits, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 7. School-sponsored social activities (dances, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 8. Student organizations (science club, FFA, pep club, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ACADEMIC | 9. Textbooks and instructional materials used in your classes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10. Variety of courses offered by this high school | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 11. Practical work experience offered by this high school | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 12. Flexibility to select your own classes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 13. Quality of classroom instruction | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 14. Testing/grading procedures | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. Attitude of the teachers/administrators toward students | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 16. Availability of teachers outside of class hours | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 17. Availability of administrators | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 18. Class size | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Excerpted from *High School Follow-up Survey*, © The American College Testing Program (ACT).

| | | Does not apply | Very satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very dissatisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| INSTRUCTION | 1. Quality of classroom instruction | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 2. Grading policies and procedures | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 3. Variety of courses offered | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 4. Amount of homework assigned | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 5. Flexibility to select your own schedule of courses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 6. Textbooks and instructional materials used in your classes | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 7. Number and kinds of tests given | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 8. Requirements for graduation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ACTIVITIES | 9. Opportunities to take part in extracurricular activities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 10. Number and kinds of student organizations | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 11. Amount of emphasis placed on extracurricular activities | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 12. School-sponsored social events (dances, etc.) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 13. Religious activities and programs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING | 14. Availability of counselors to students | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 15. Value of information provided by counselors | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 16. Assistance provided in course selection and class scheduling | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 17. Counseling provided for personal problems | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 18. Assistance provided in selecting and planning a career | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 19. Assistance in finding a full-time job after graduation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 20. Assistance with college planning and selection | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Excerpted from *High School Student Opinion Survey*, © The American College Testing Program (ACT).

## *Type V*
## *Needs Based on Requests for Assistance*

This fifth type of needs assessment is a more direct method in that it usually allows students to specifically identify the program activity or component in which they would like additional staff effort. This type of needs survey differs from previous types in that it implies a personal deficiency or dissatisfaction by directly translating their need into suggested program change or improvement. Two examples of survey items for this type of needs assessment follow.

**SECTION III (Continued)**

| | This item is NOT IMPORTANT or DOES NOT APPLY to me. | I want NO FURTHER help with this item. | I want a LITTLE more help with this item. | I want a MEDIUM AMOUNT of added help with this item. | I want MUCH MORE help with this item. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PART A—Personal Growth & Development (Continued) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (60) dealing with the problems of divorce and/or parent separation in my family |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (61) dealing with pregnancy and/or being a parent while still in high school |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (62) learning how to stay mentally healthy |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (63) handling things that worry me |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (64) handling pressure from my parents, teachers, and other adults |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (65) dealing with feeling lonely and/or depressed |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (66) controlling the stress or fear I feel before or when I'm taking a test |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (67) learning more about suicide—the causes, warning signs, and intervention techniques |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (68) knowing where I can go to get help with my personal problems |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (69) maintaining and/or improving my physical health (exercise, nutrition, etc.) |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (70) understanding my own sexual development |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (71) learning more about AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (72) dealing with the effects of alcohol, nicotine, and other addictive drugs |

**PART B**

From items 37-72 (on pages 3 and 4), select the 3 personal areas with which you MOST WANT ADDITIONAL HELP. Write the item numbers of those three in the circles to the right.

Excerpted from *Student Needs Assessment Questionnaire*, © The American College Testing Program (ACT).

11. I would like to know more about:

A. What can help me in school to get better grades
B. What can help me enjoy my free time
C. What can help me earn more money now
D. What can help me choose a career
E. What can help me have more friends
F. I do not need help at this time to know more about myself

13. In planning my career (life's work) for the future, at this time, I need the most help in finding out:

A. What career fields there are (kinds of jobs available)
B. What education is required for certain jobs
C. What people do in different jobs (e.g., doctor, store manager, truck driver, etc.)
D. How much a job pays
E. Where jobs are found
F. What are different ways of getting certain jobs
G. Which jobs may or may not be needed in the future
H. I do not need help at this time in planning my career

19. I would like additional help in learning: (Select ONE or TWO of the following.)

A. What kinds of jobs are available to students my age
B. How much part-time jobs pay
C. Where I can look for part-time and summer jobs
D. How I make out an application form
E. What the proper way is to interview for a job
F. How I get a social security card
G. Where I get a work permit
H. I need no help at this time

Excerpted from *Educational and Career Planning: Individual Guidance Assessment*, © C. D. Johnson and S. K. Johnson.

## *Summary*

The results-based program suggested in this guide is inductively developed prior to the assessment and use of student needs. After the program has been designed by professionals and/or recognized specialists and based on research *and* professional knowledge, needs data are collected from students to identify the gaps between desired and actual student attainment of competencies. The demonstration of competencies is the basis to determine if the program is delivering what it was planned to deliver.

The essential type of needs data collected under this approach is used primarily to monitor and adjust the processes to ensure that *all* students acquire the desired competencies. Needs data are, in essence, evaluation data.

Other types of needs assessment can be used in addition to the results-based type if uses of such data can be justified to supplement and complement the uses of the results-based needs. Several examples of instruments used to collect these supplementary needs data were presented and described.

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